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(54) **GOLF CLUBS AND METHODS TO MANUFACTURE GOLF CLUBS**

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filed on Sep. 12, 2016.

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18, 2016.

(51) **Int. Cl.**  
*A63B 53/04* (2015.01)  
*A63B 53/06* (2015.01)  
*A63B 53/10* (2015.01)  
*A63B 60/00* (2015.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**  
CPC ..... *A63B 53/047* (2013.01); *A63B 53/0475*  
(2013.01); *A63B 53/10* (2013.01); *A63B 60/00*  
(2015.10); *A63B 2053/0491* (2013.01)

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CPC ..... *A63B 53/10*; *A63B 2053/0408*; *A63B*  
*2053/0412*; *A63B 2053/0466*; *A63B*  
*2053/047*; *A63B 53/0475*; *A63B 60/00*  
USPC ..... *473/305-350*, *287-292*  
See application file for complete search history.

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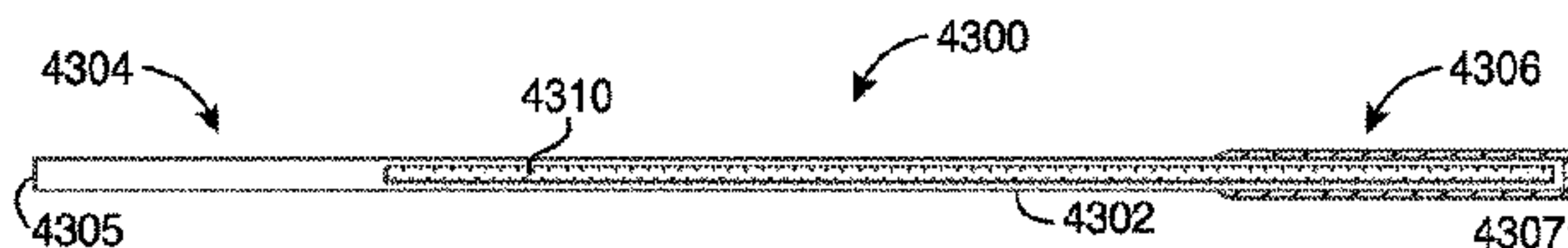
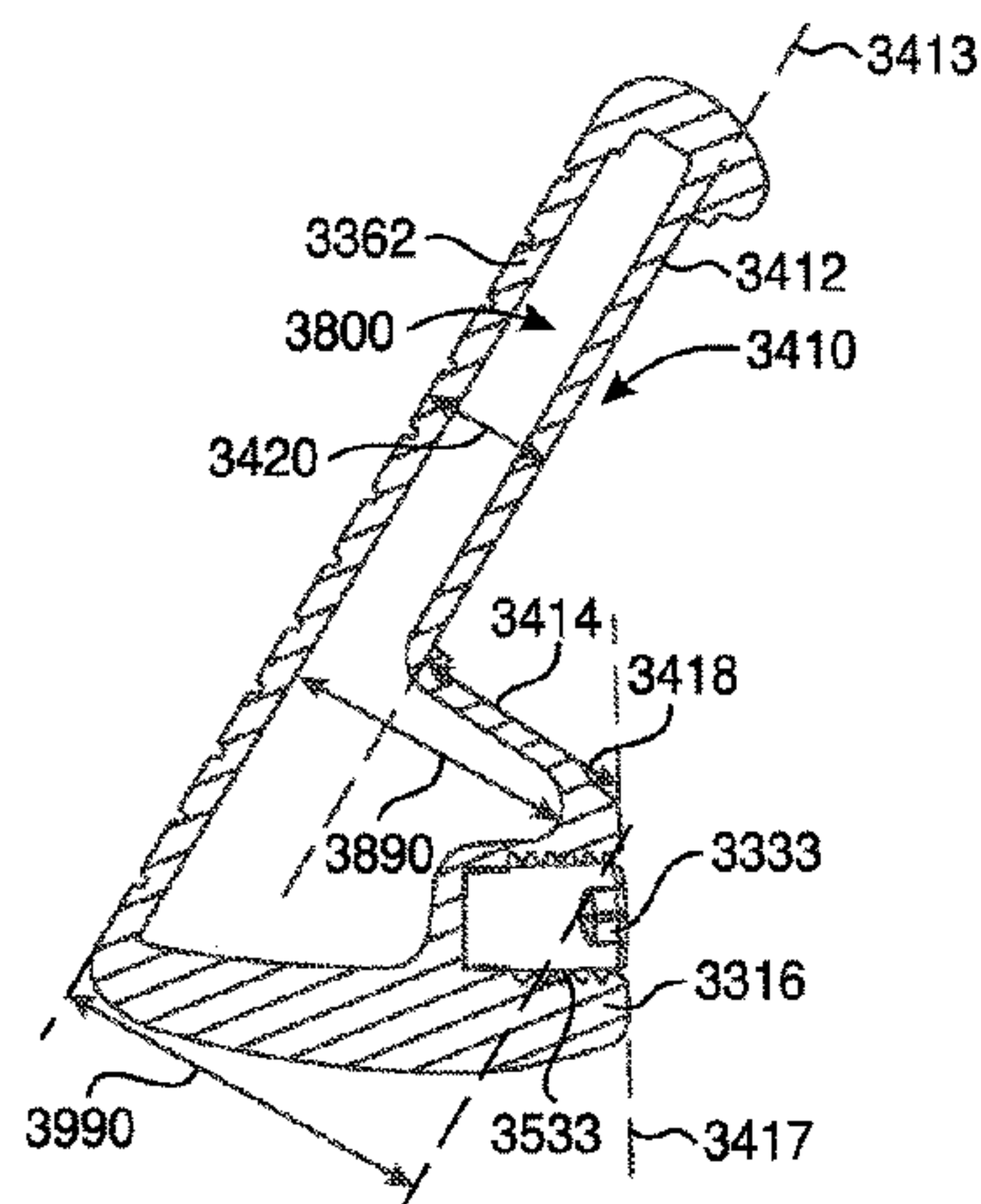
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*Primary Examiner* — Sebastiano Passaniti

(57) **ABSTRACT**

Embodiments of golf clubs and methods to manufacture golf clubs are generally described herein. In one example, a golf club may include a golf club head having an interior cavity and a shaft attached to the golf club head. At least a portion of the shaft may be filled with an elastic polymer material, and the interior cavity may be at least partially filled with an elastic polymer material. Other examples and embodiments may be described and claimed.

**20 Claims, 23 Drawing Sheets**



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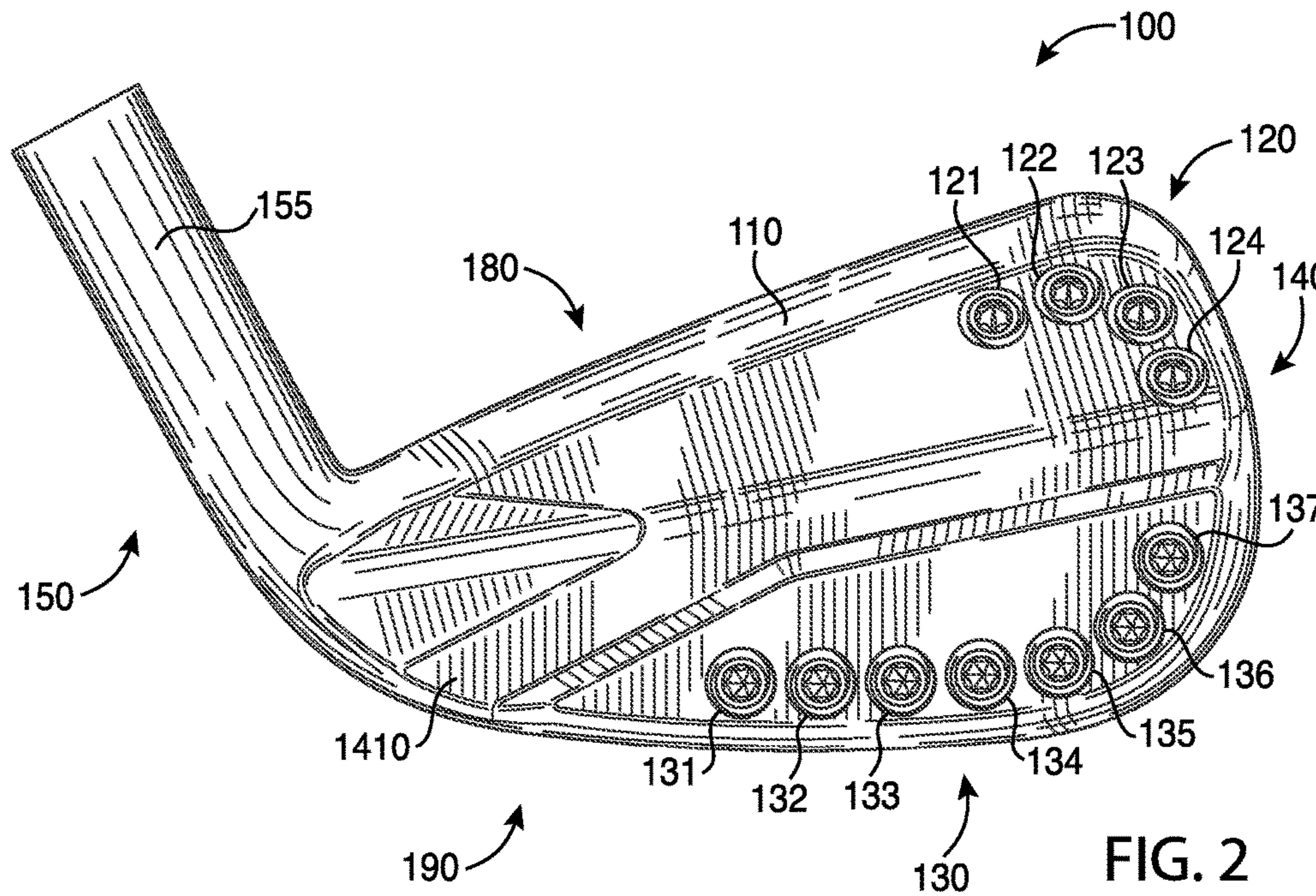
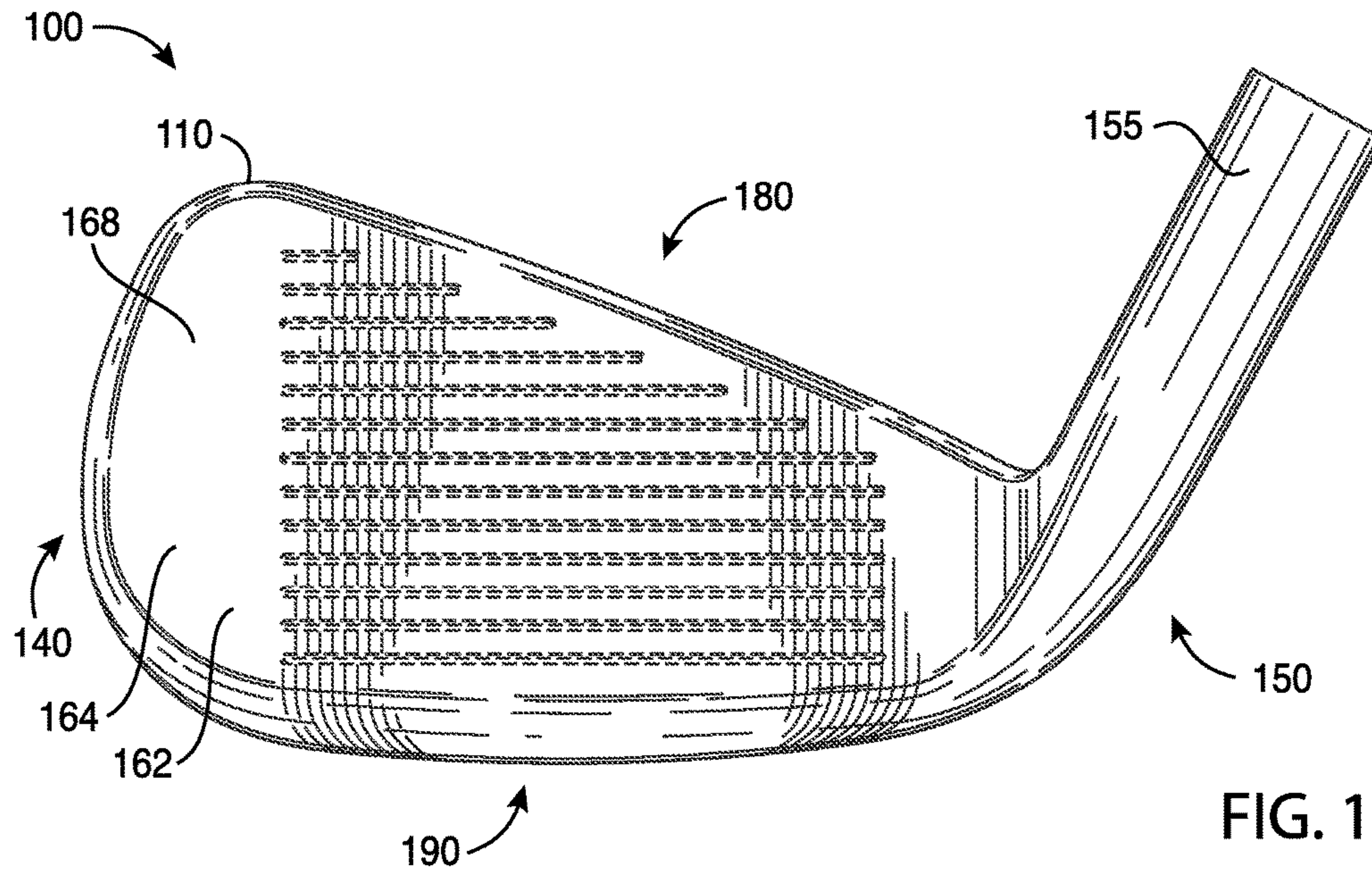
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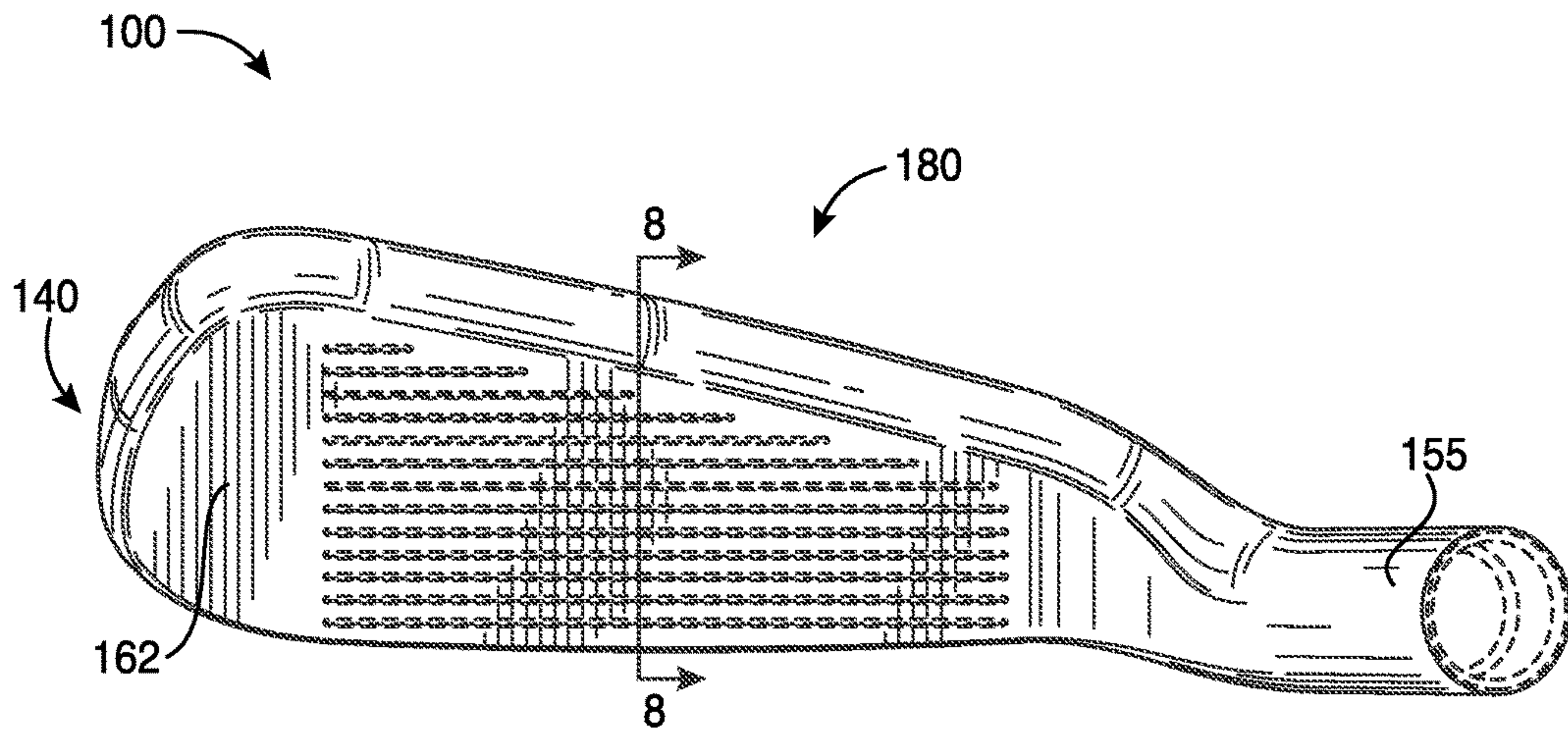


FIG. 3

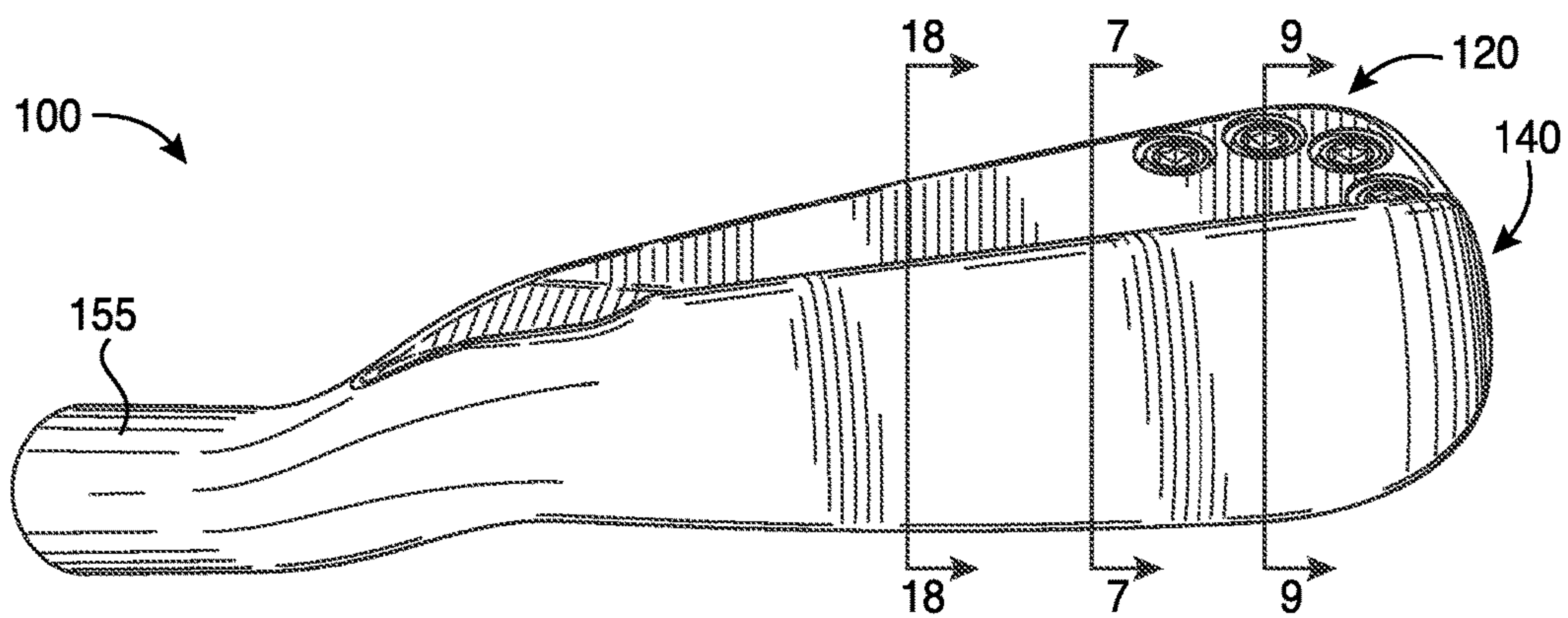
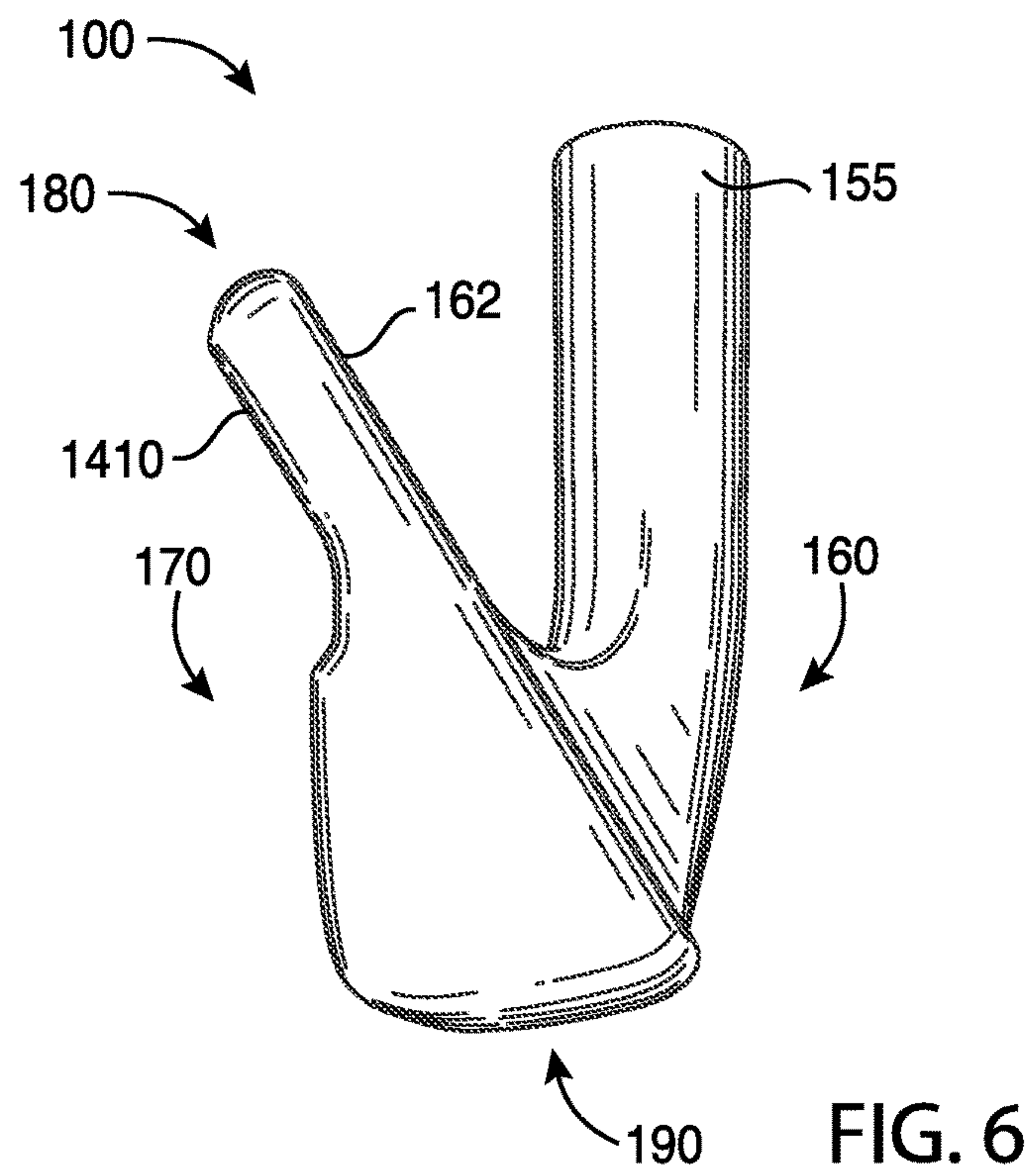
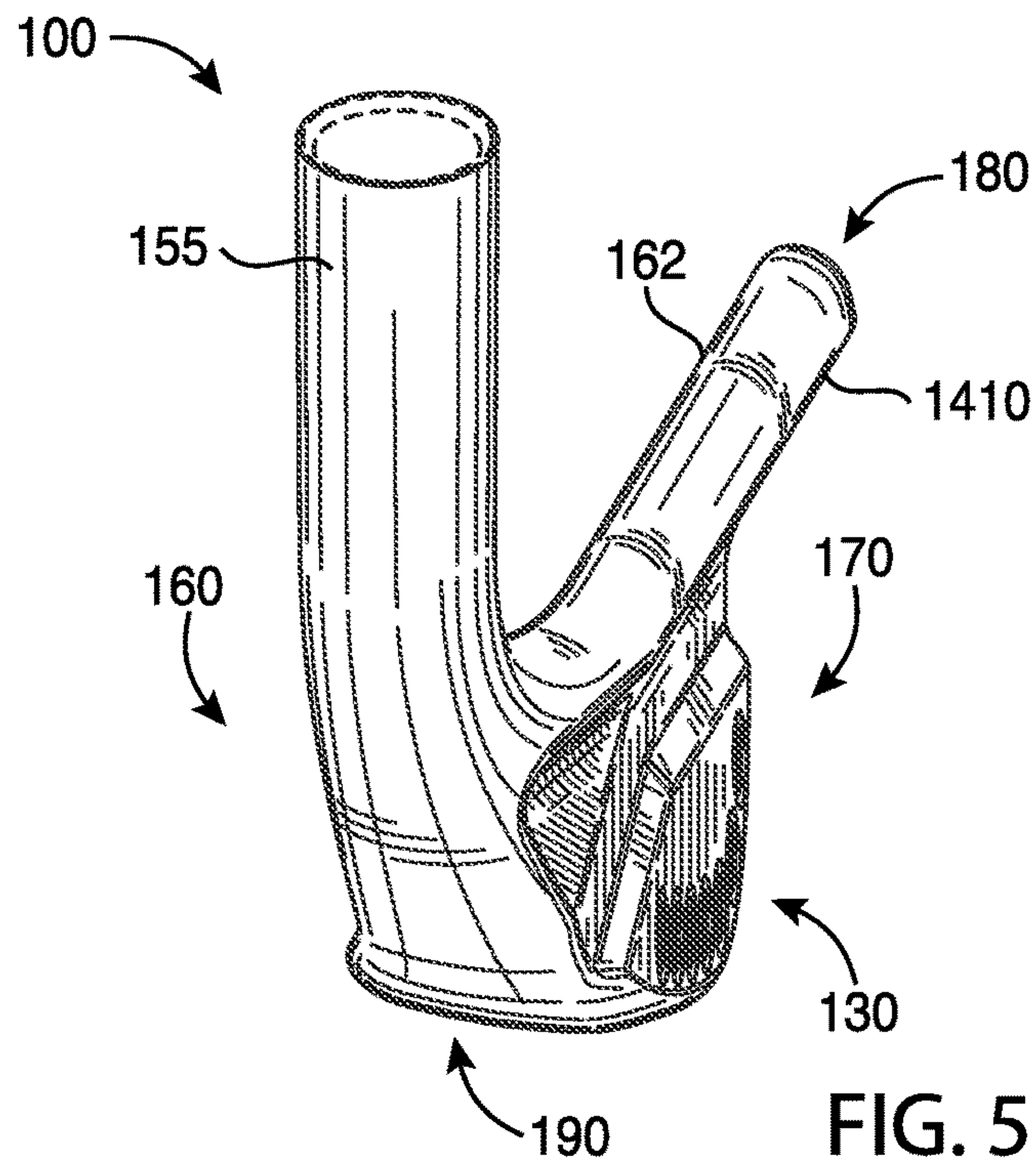


FIG. 4





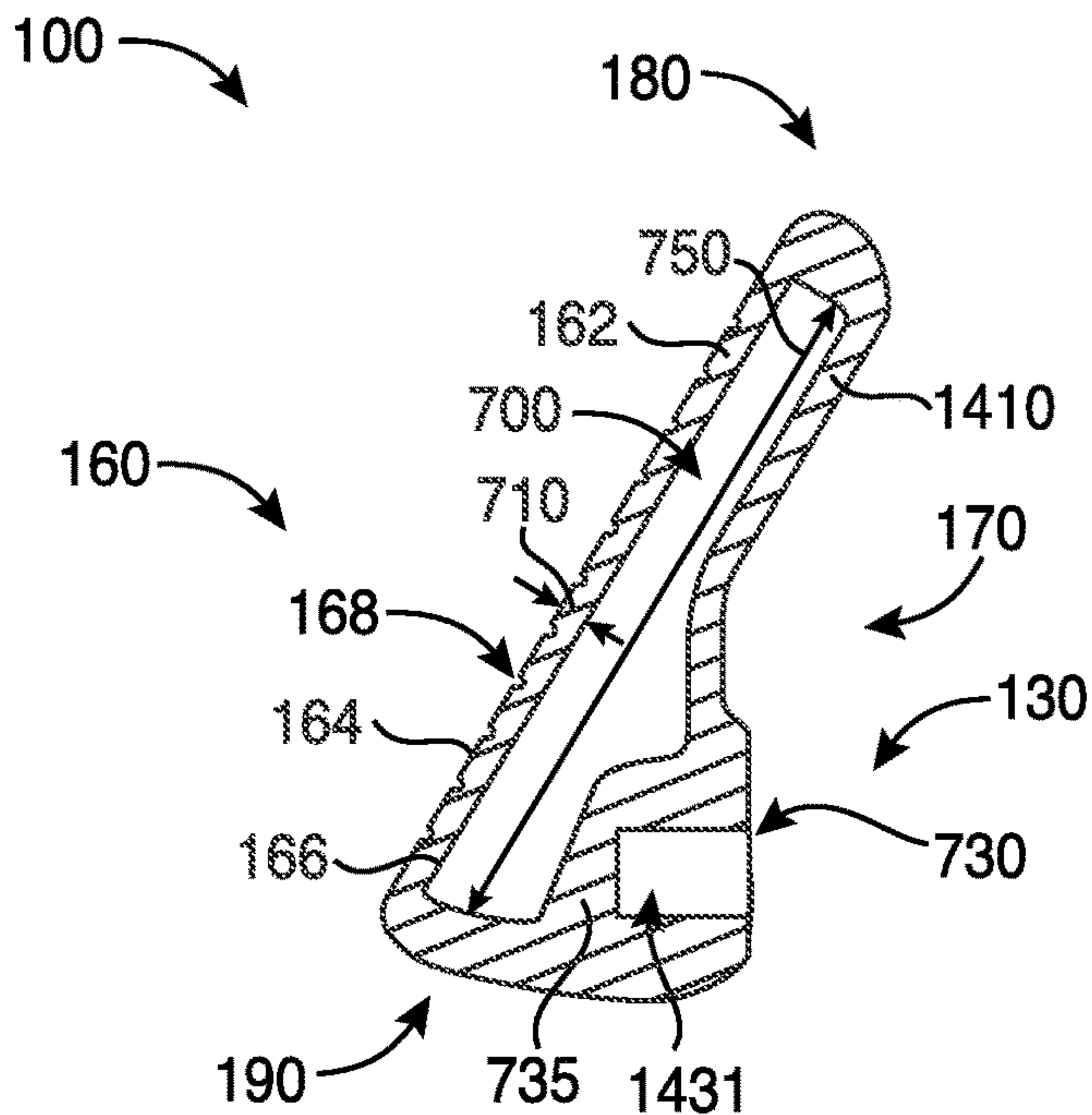


FIG. 7

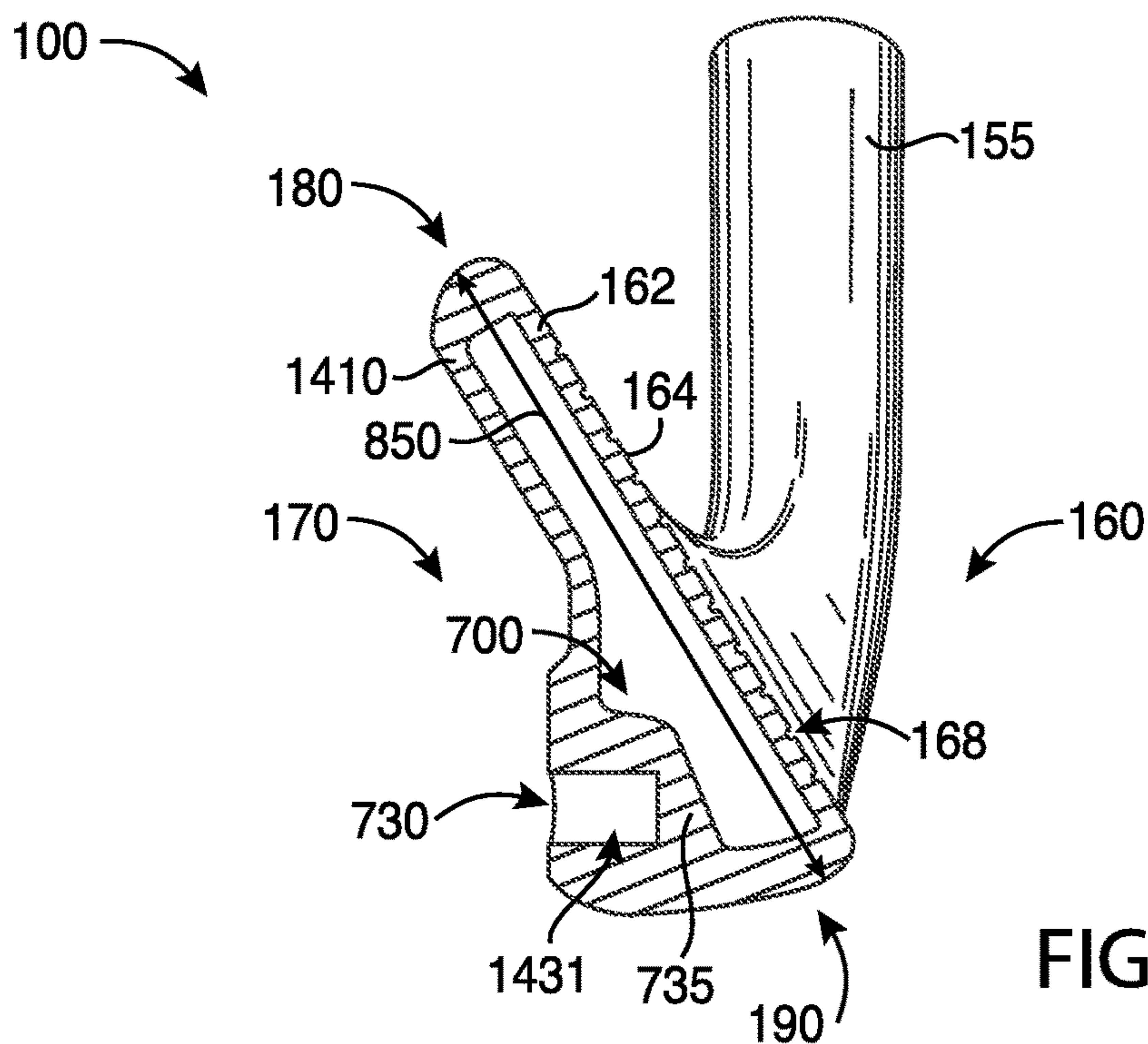


FIG. 8

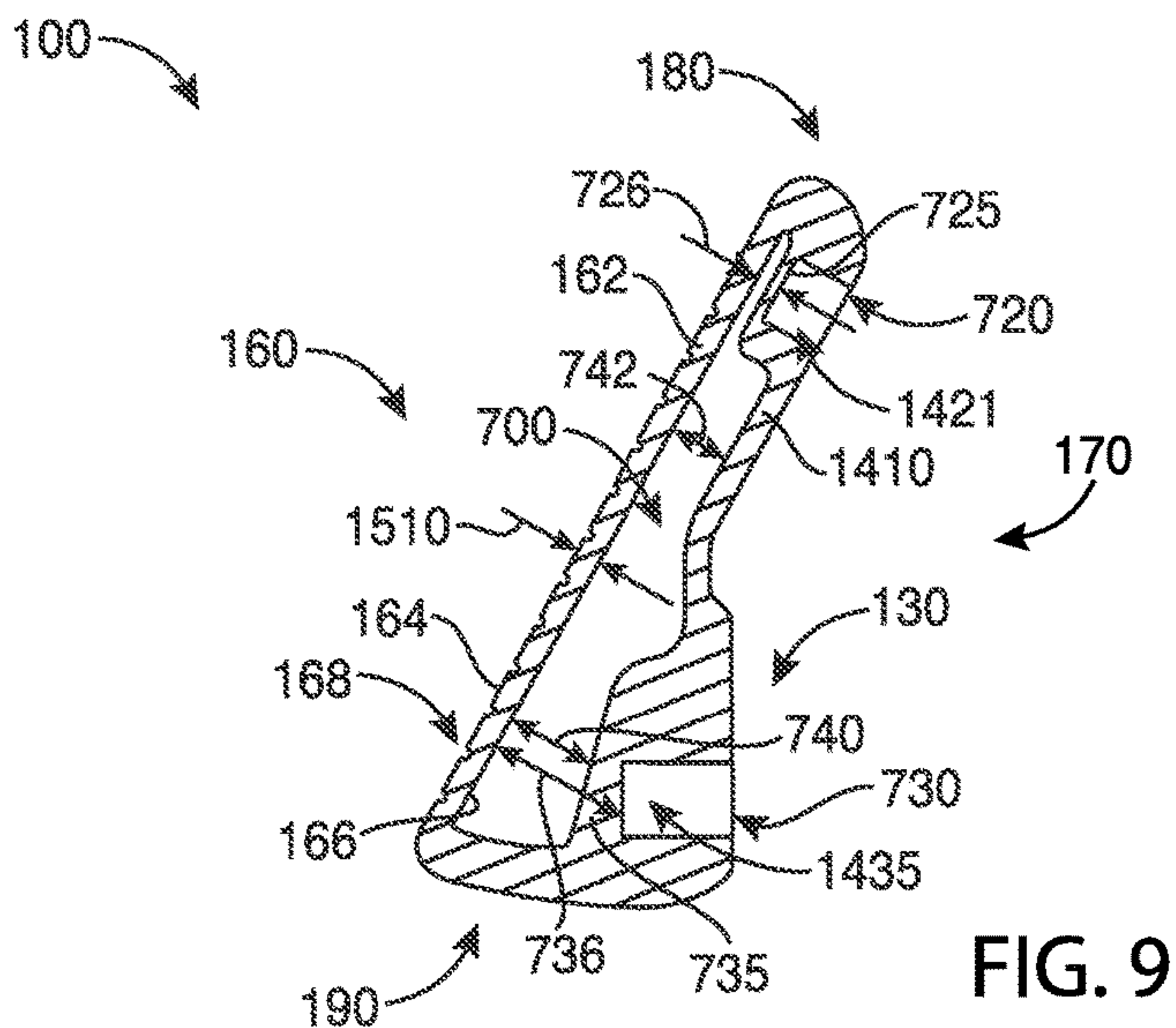


FIG. 9

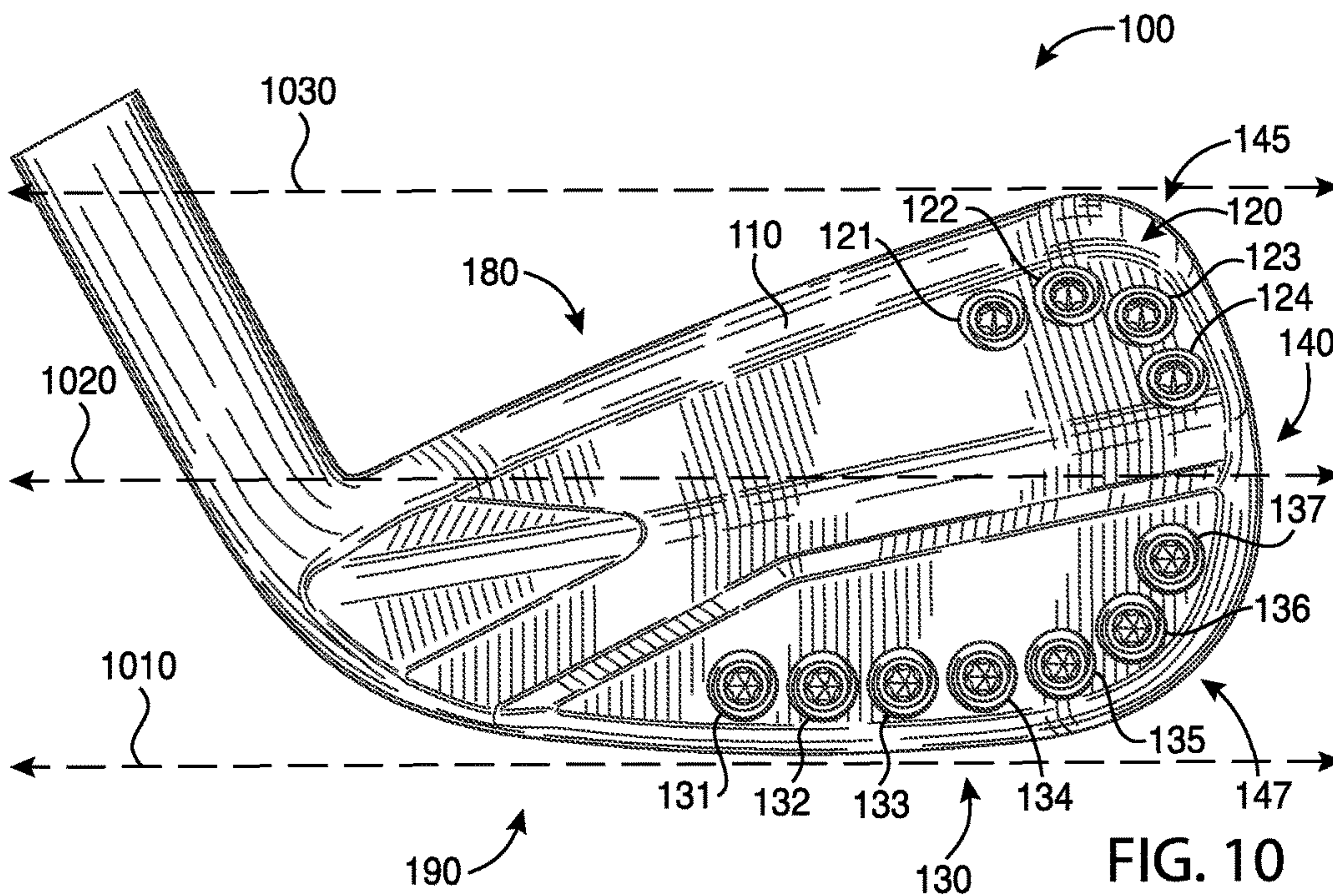


FIG. 10



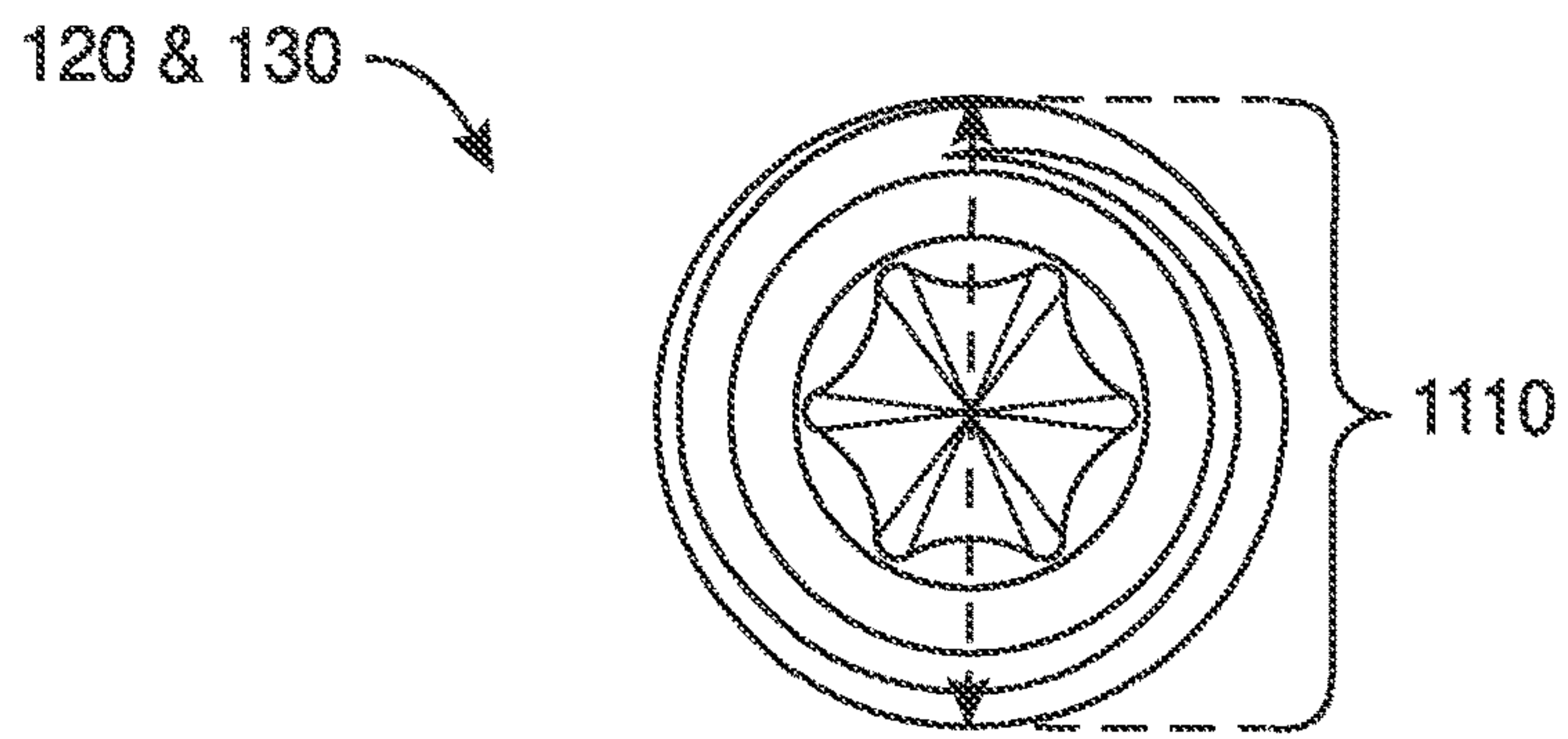


FIG. 11

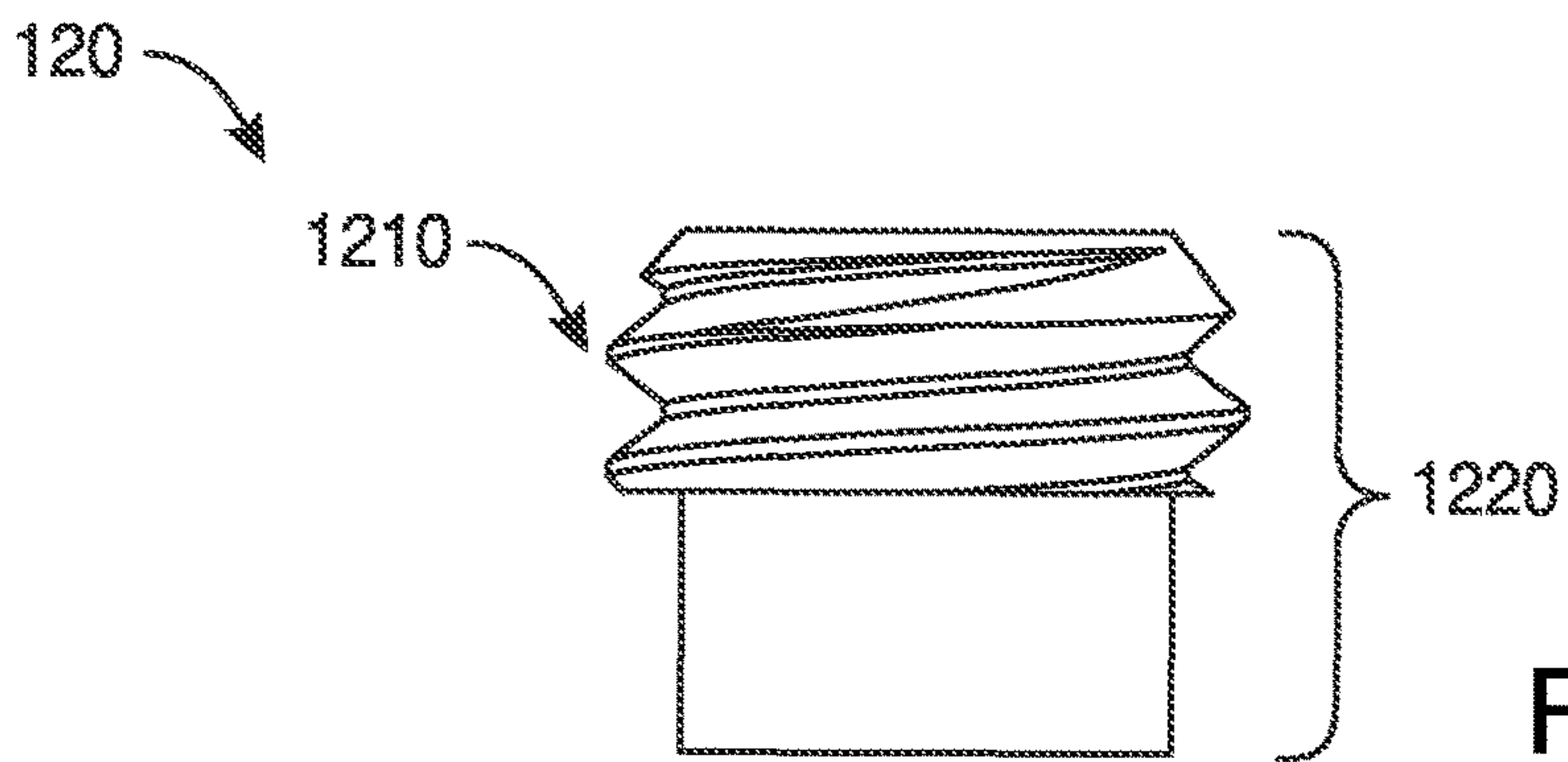


FIG. 12

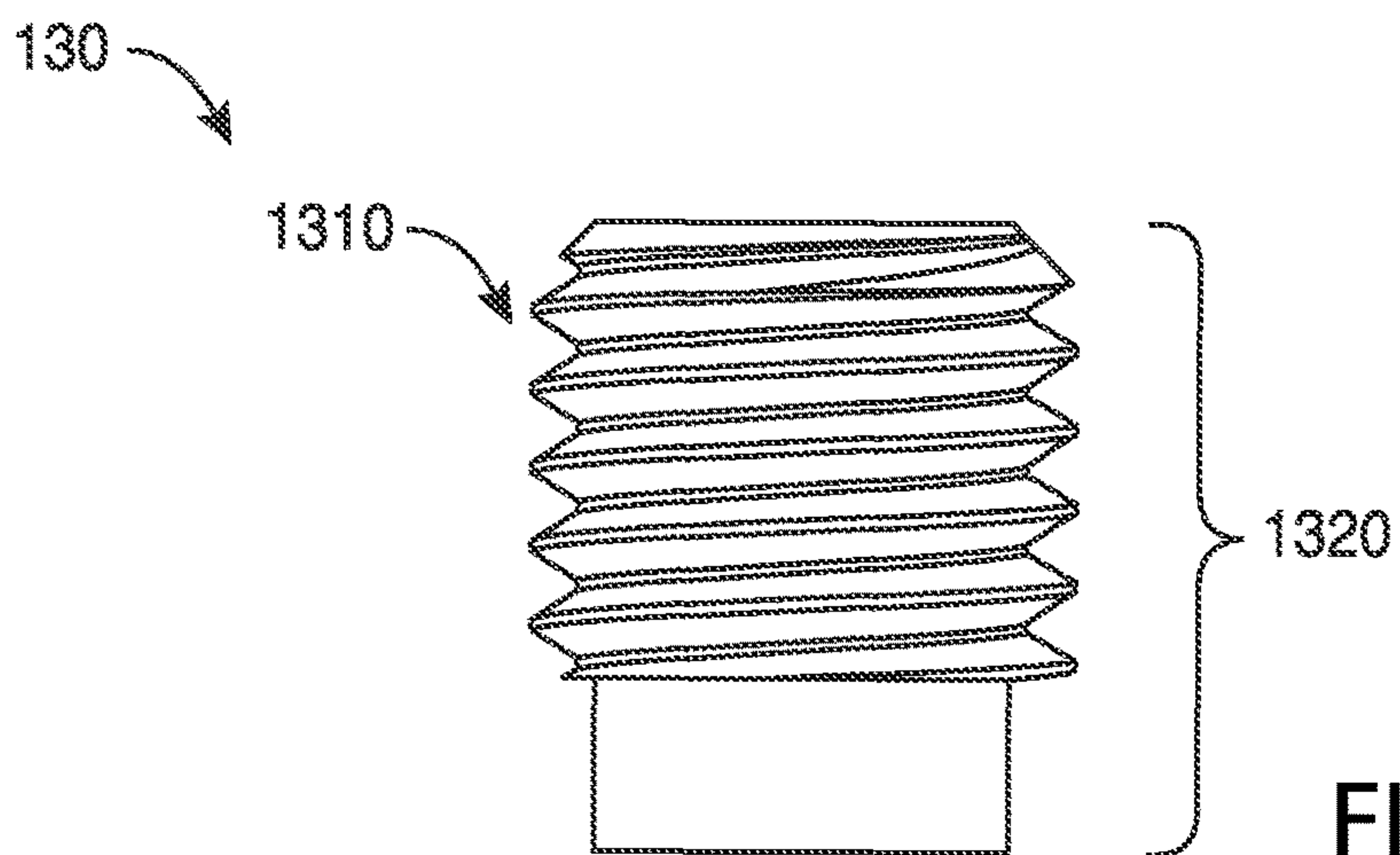


FIG. 13



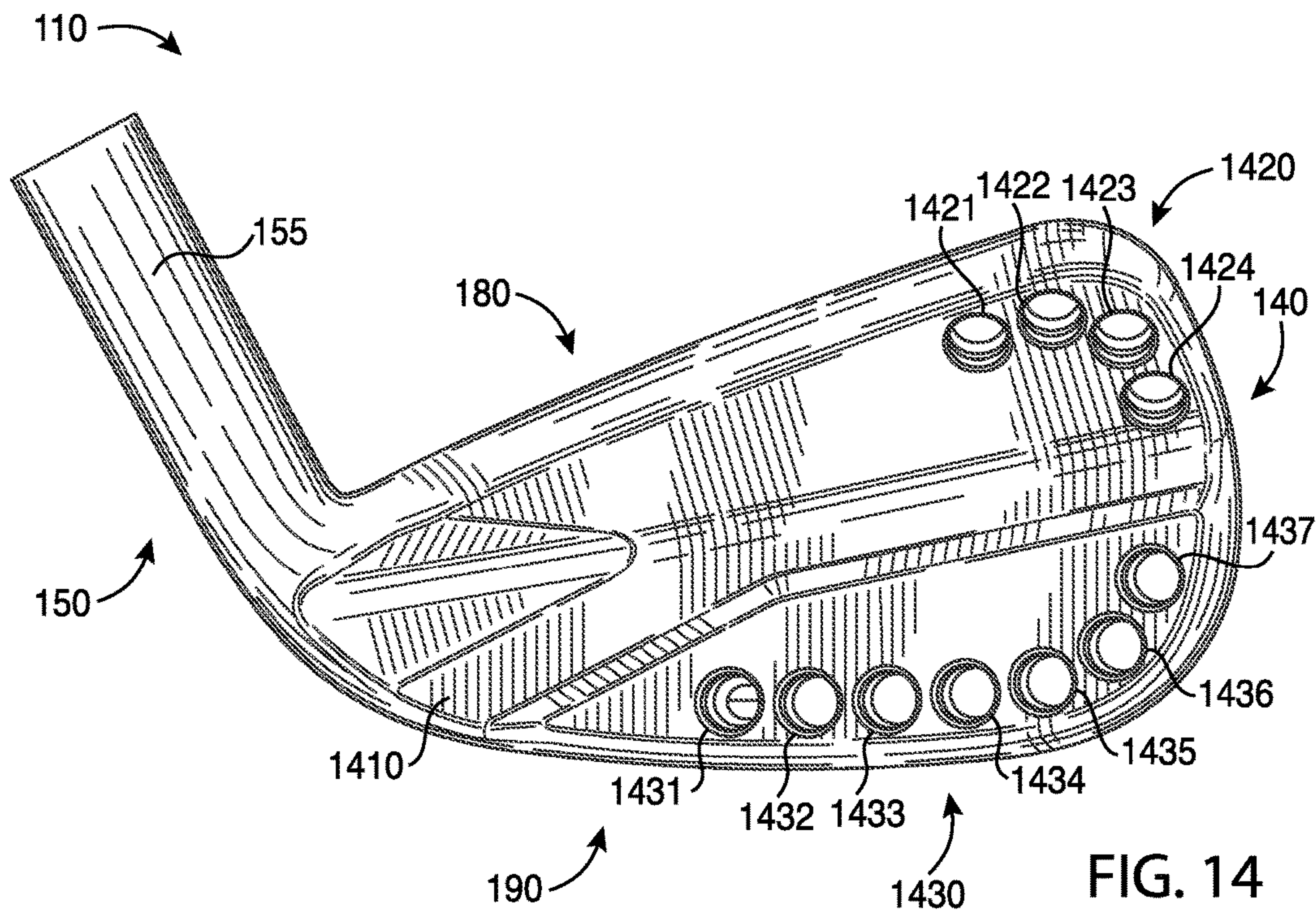


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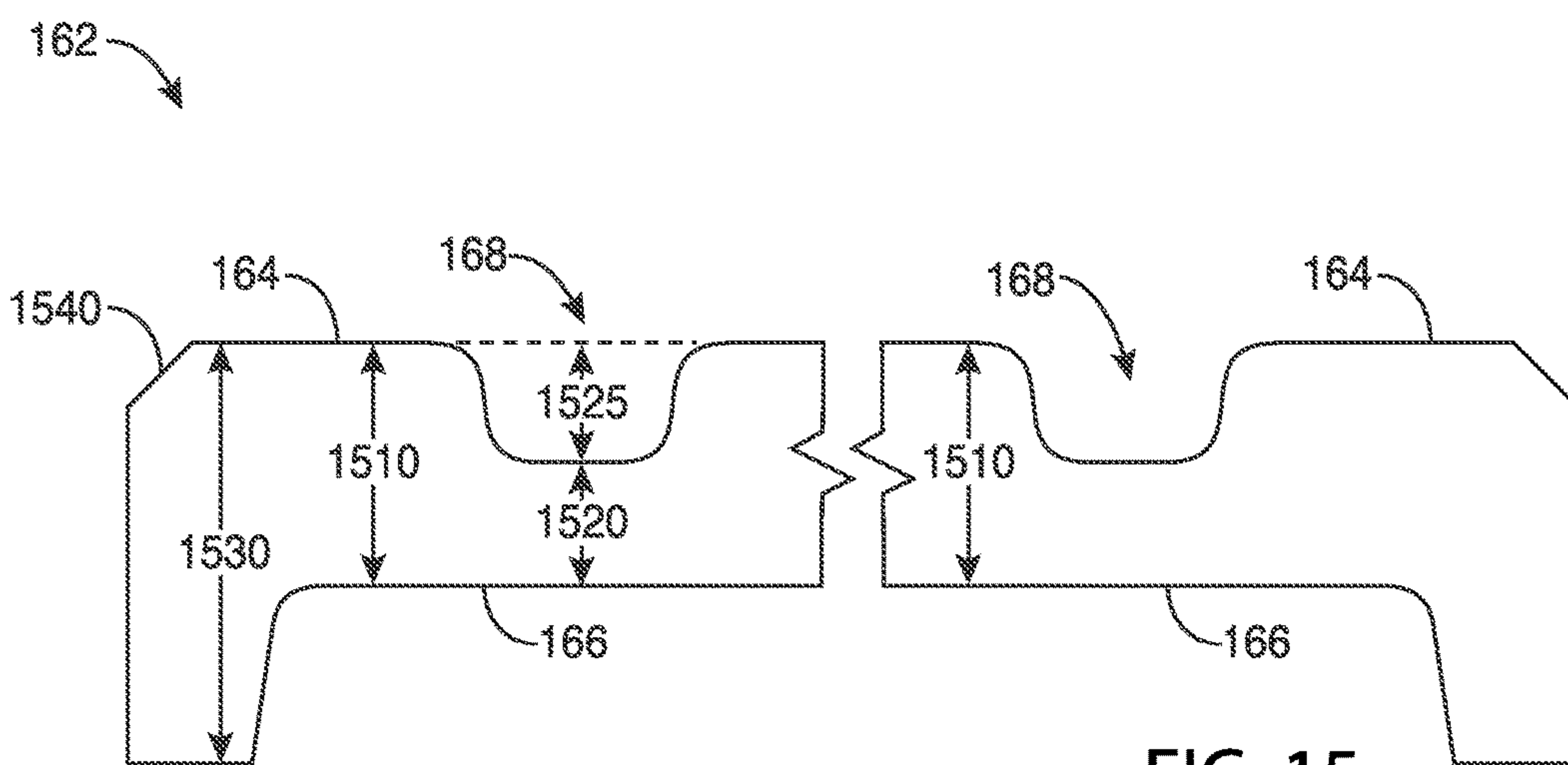


FIG. 15

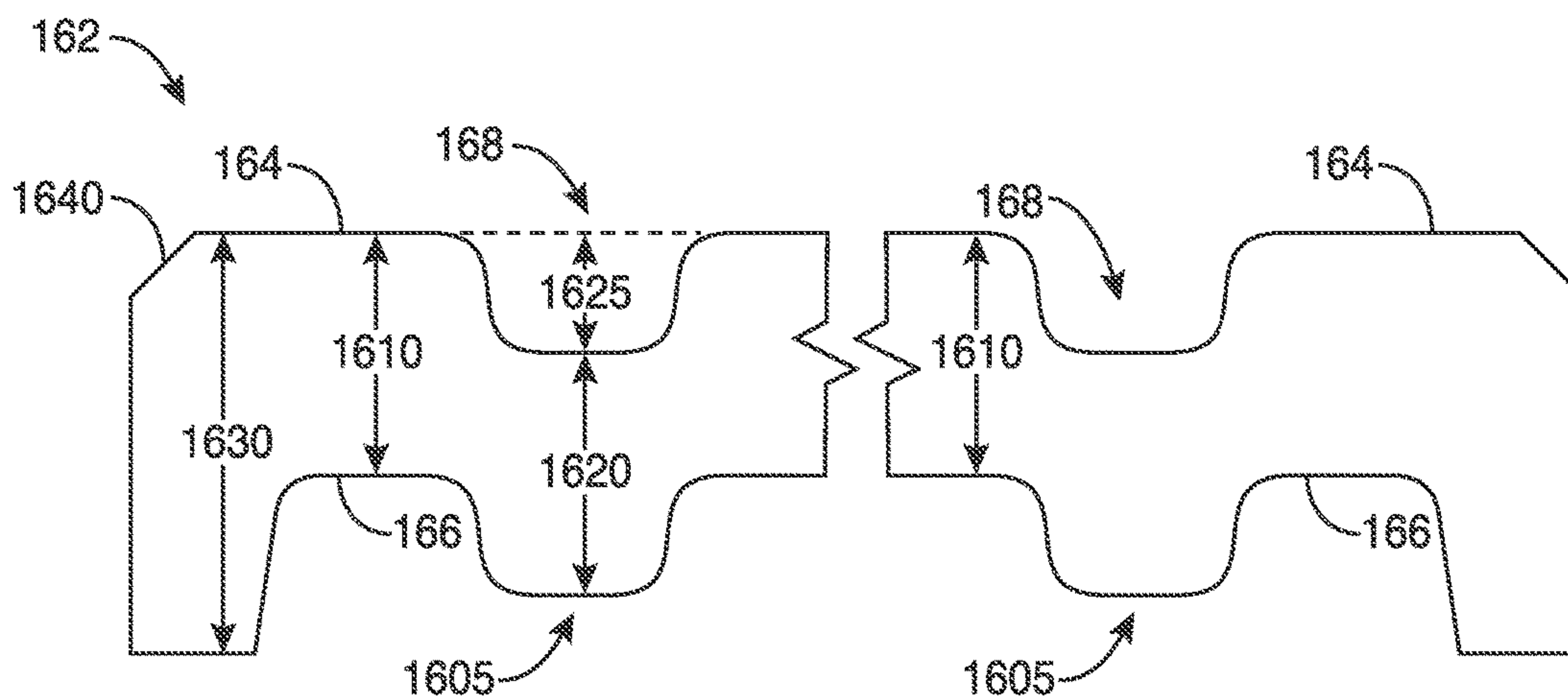


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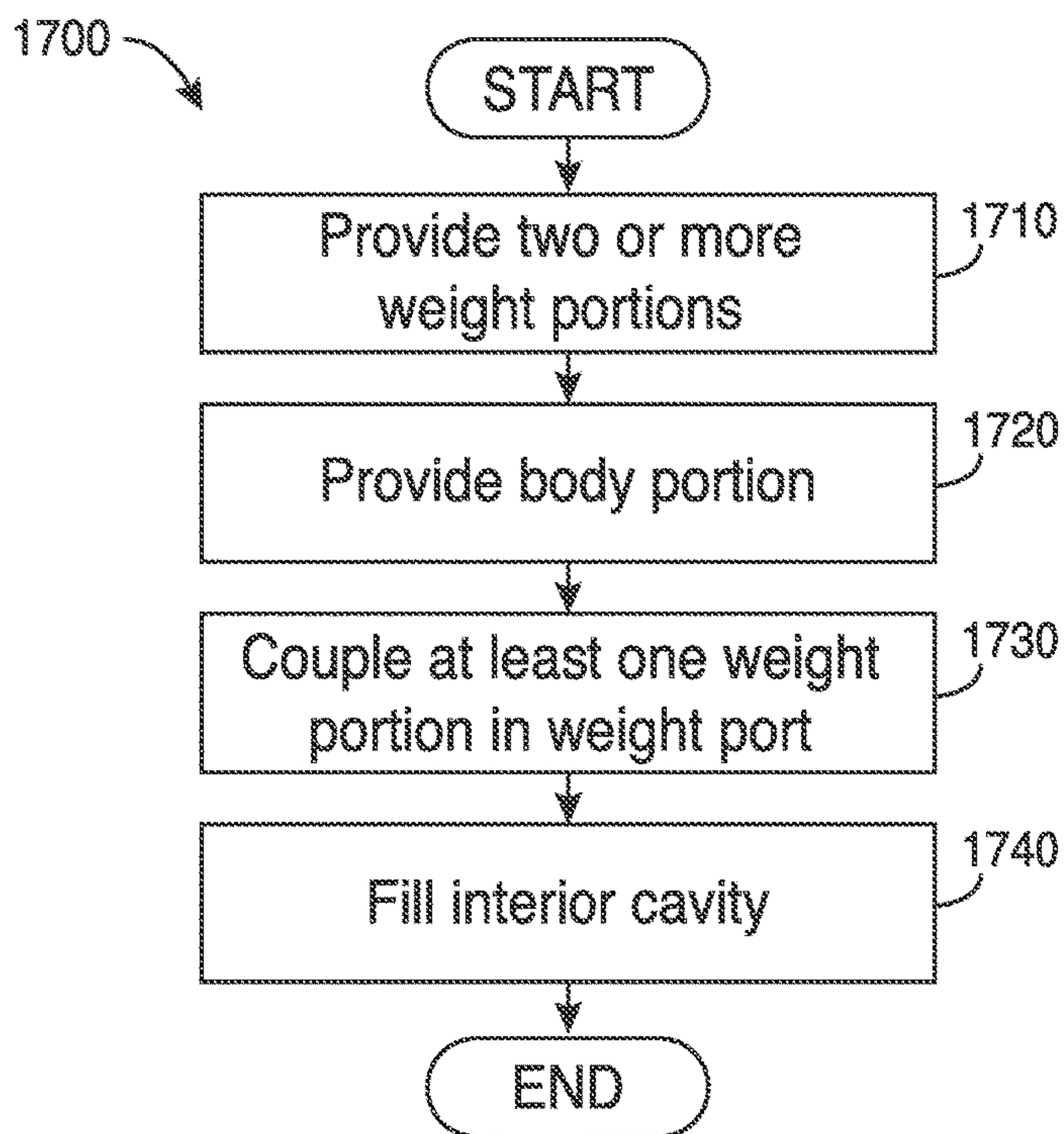


FIG. 17



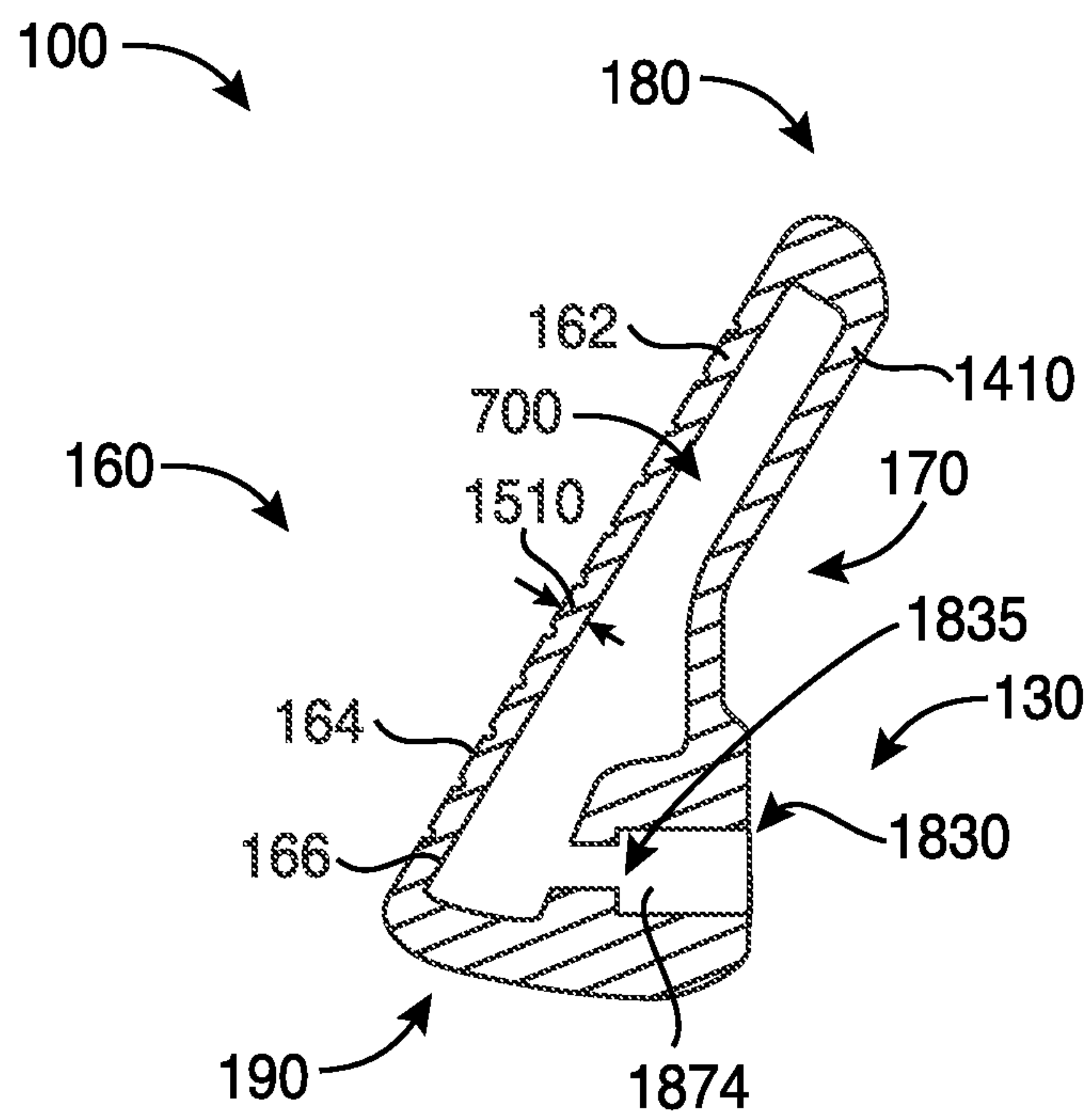


FIG. 18

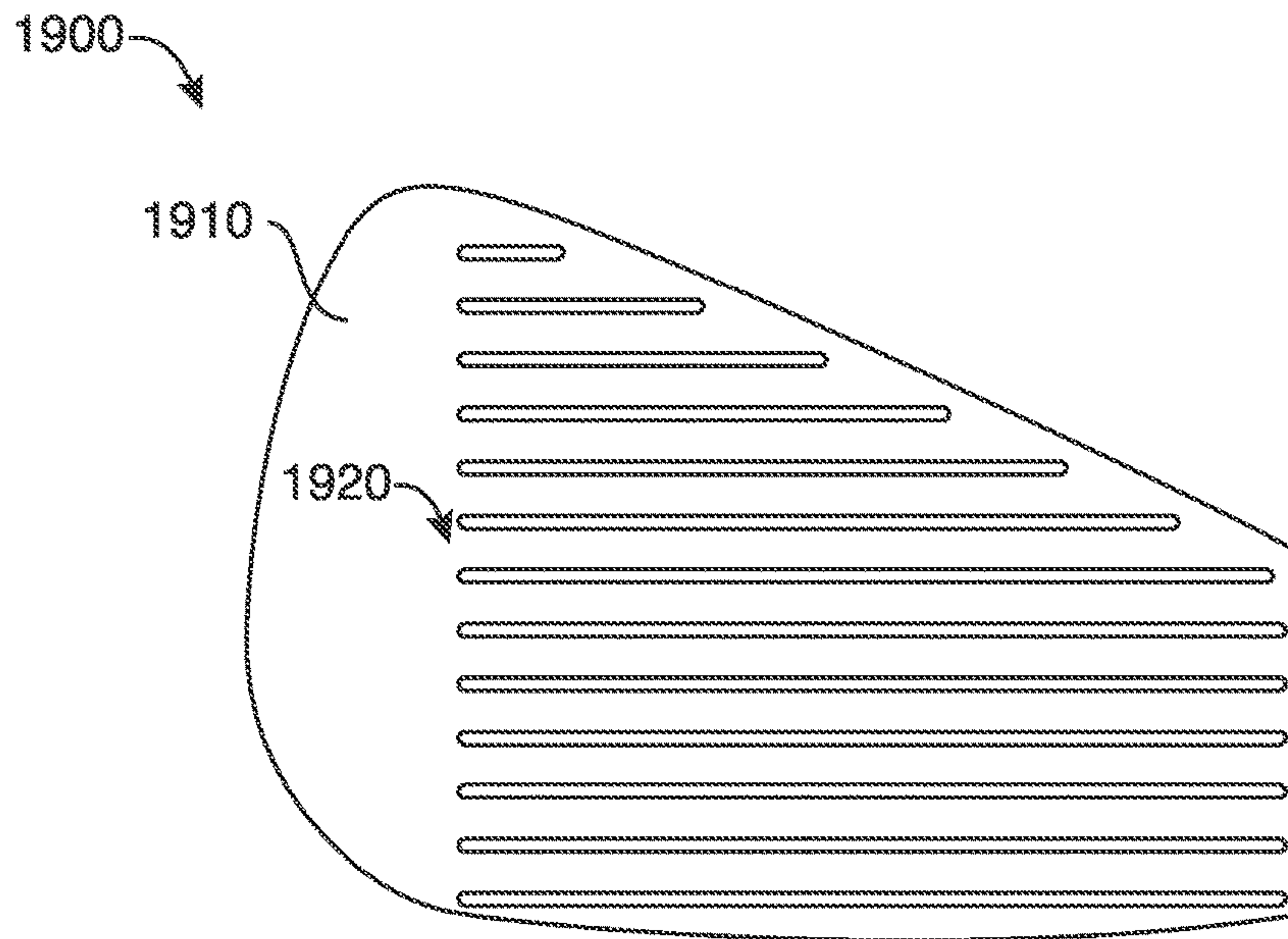


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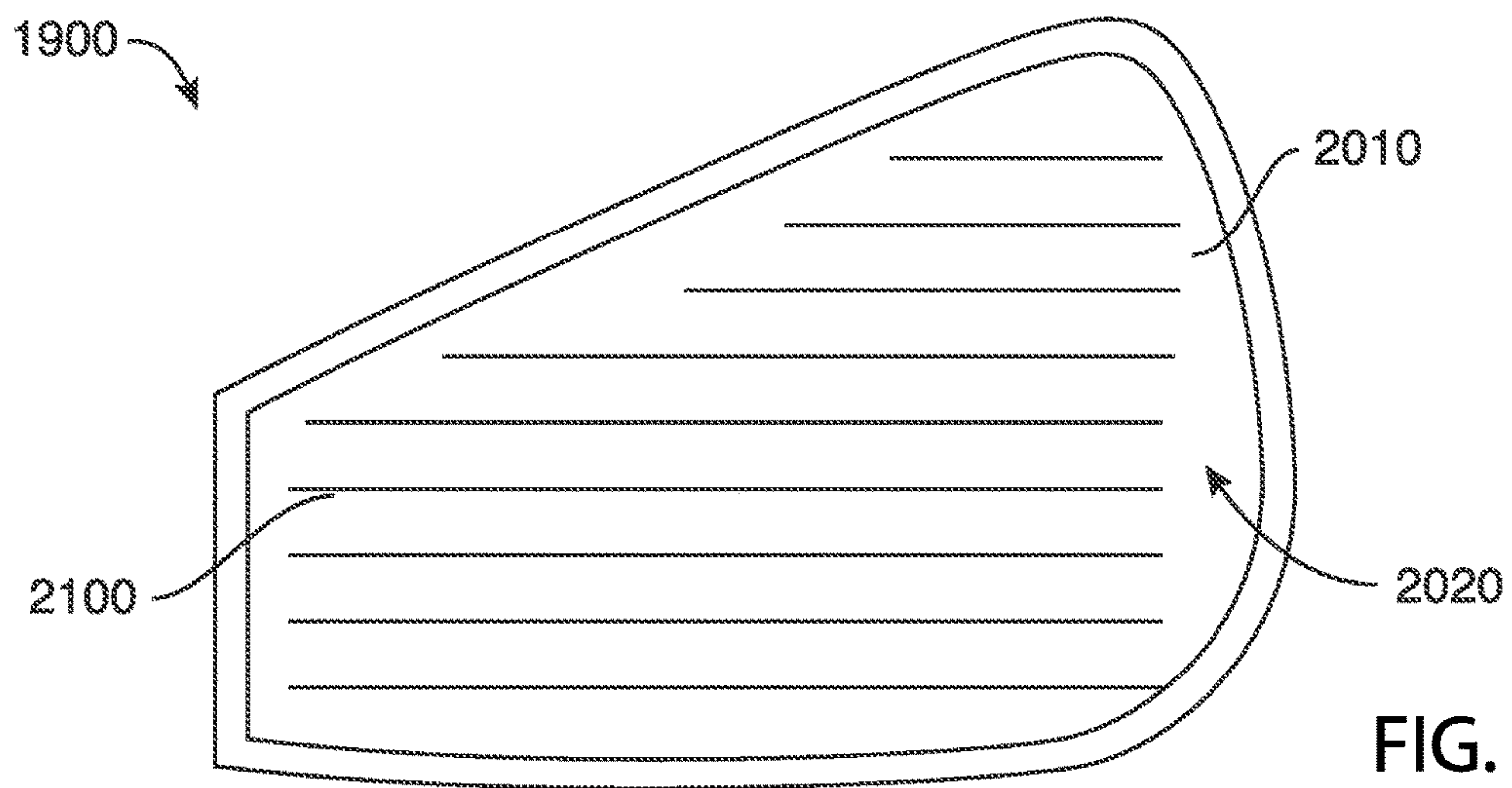


FIG. 20



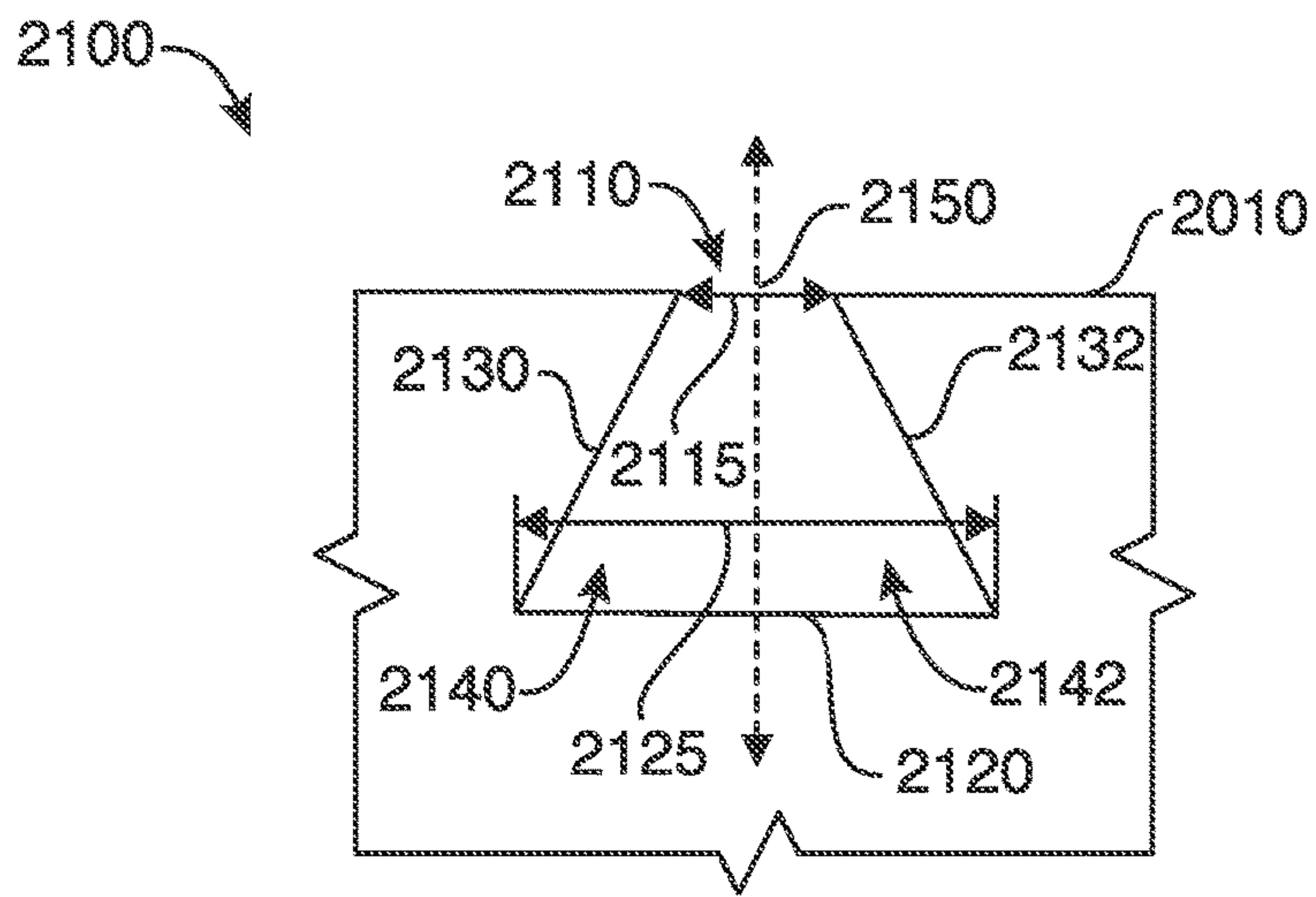


FIG. 21

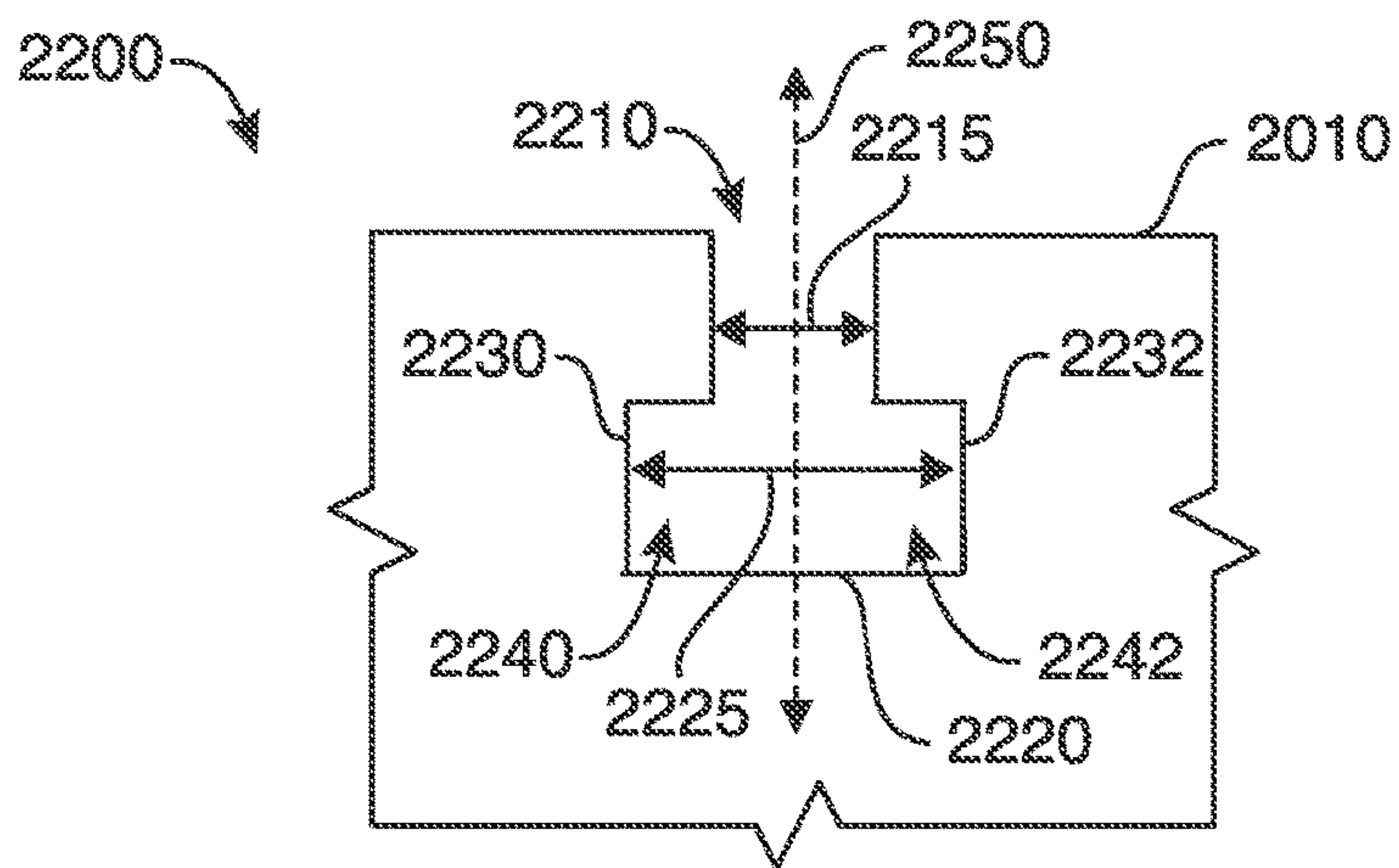


FIG. 22

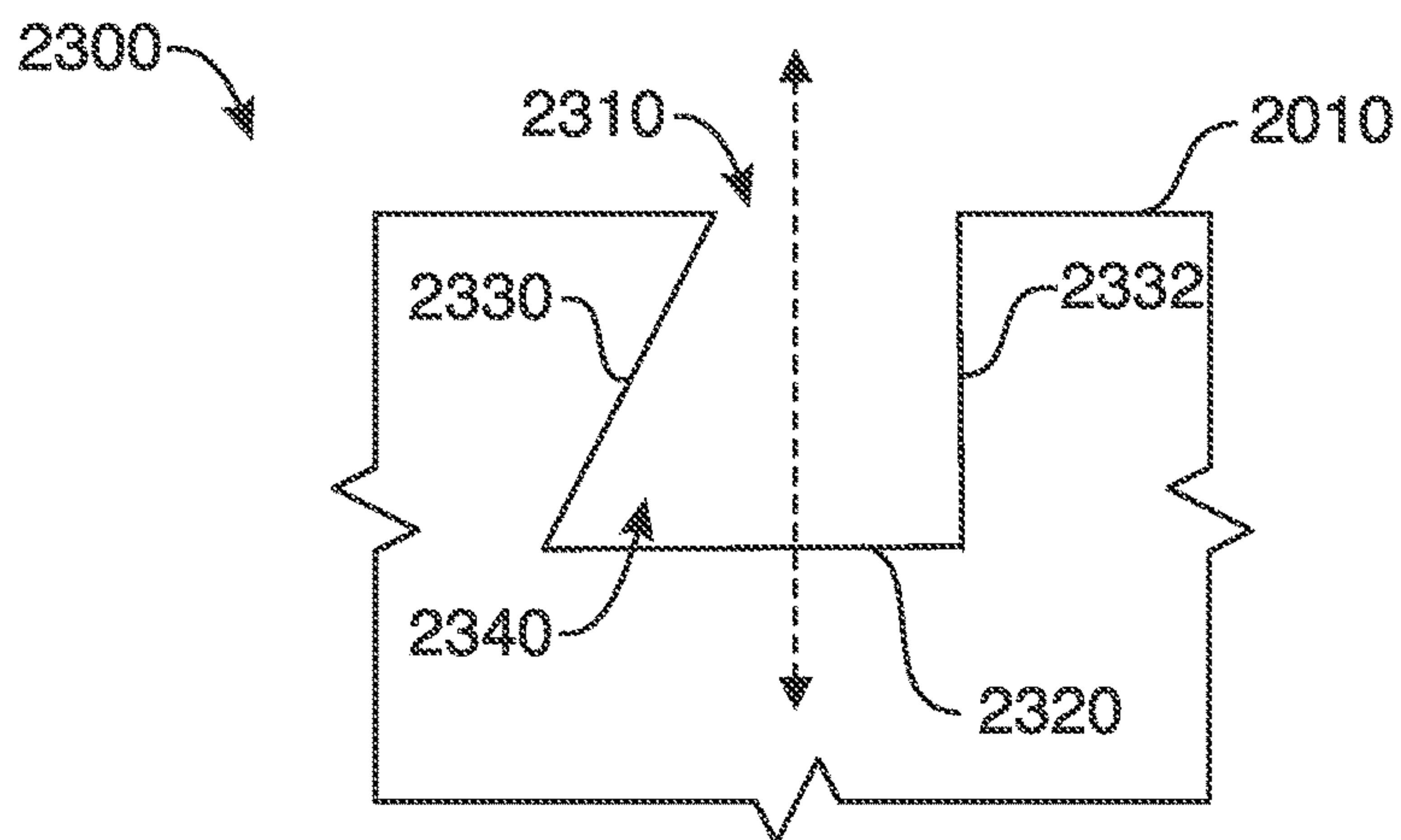


FIG. 23

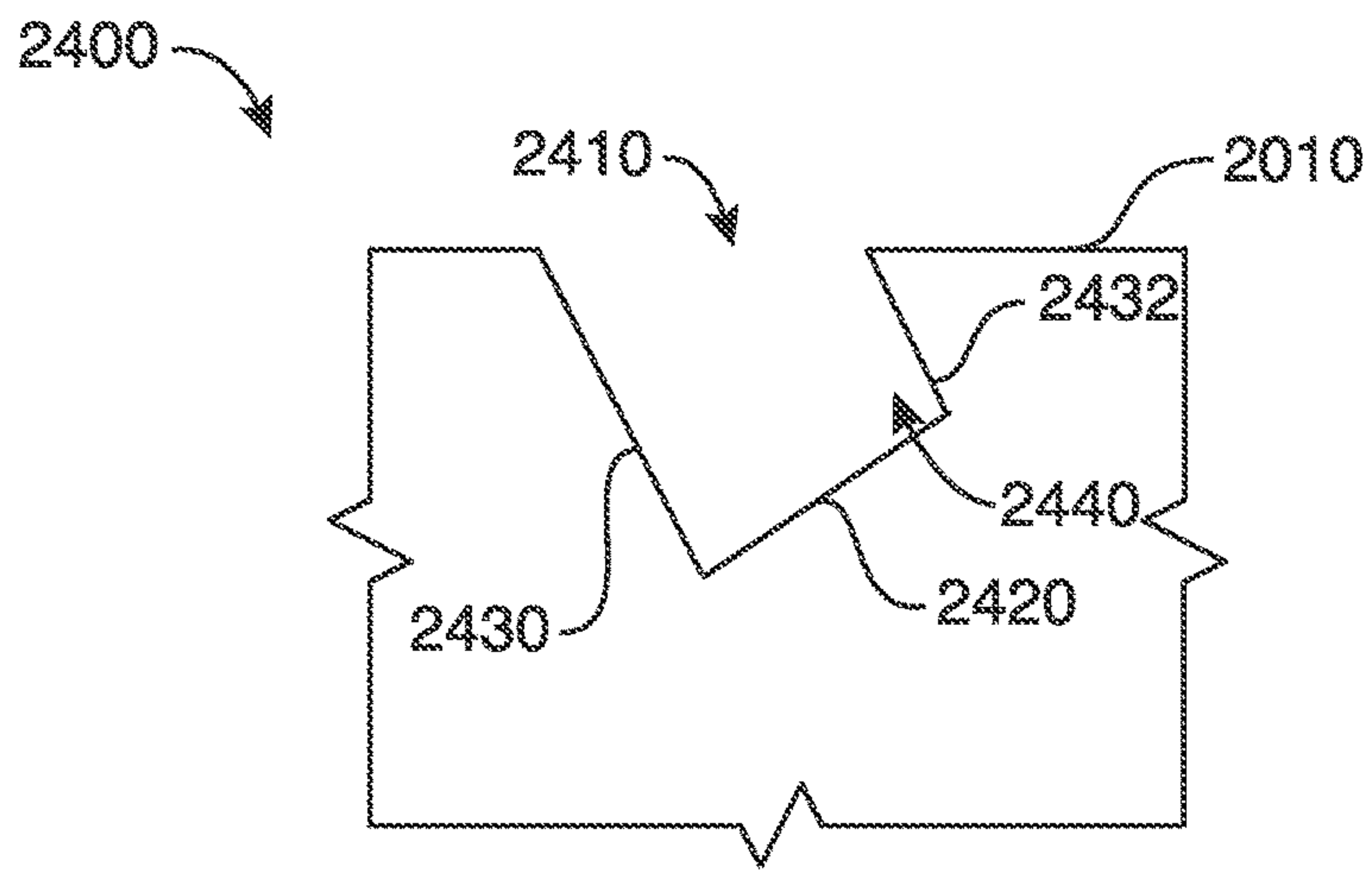


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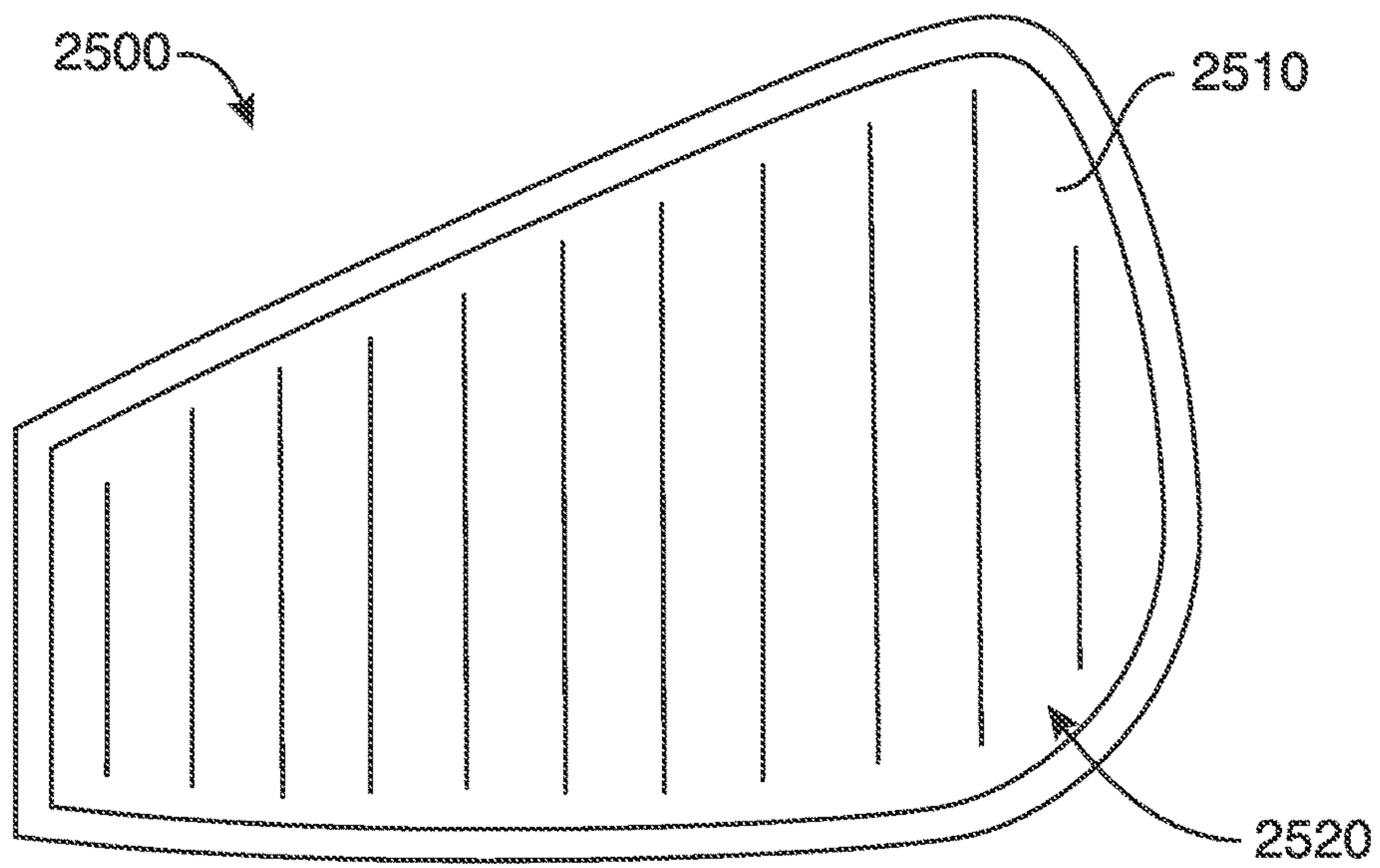


FIG. 25



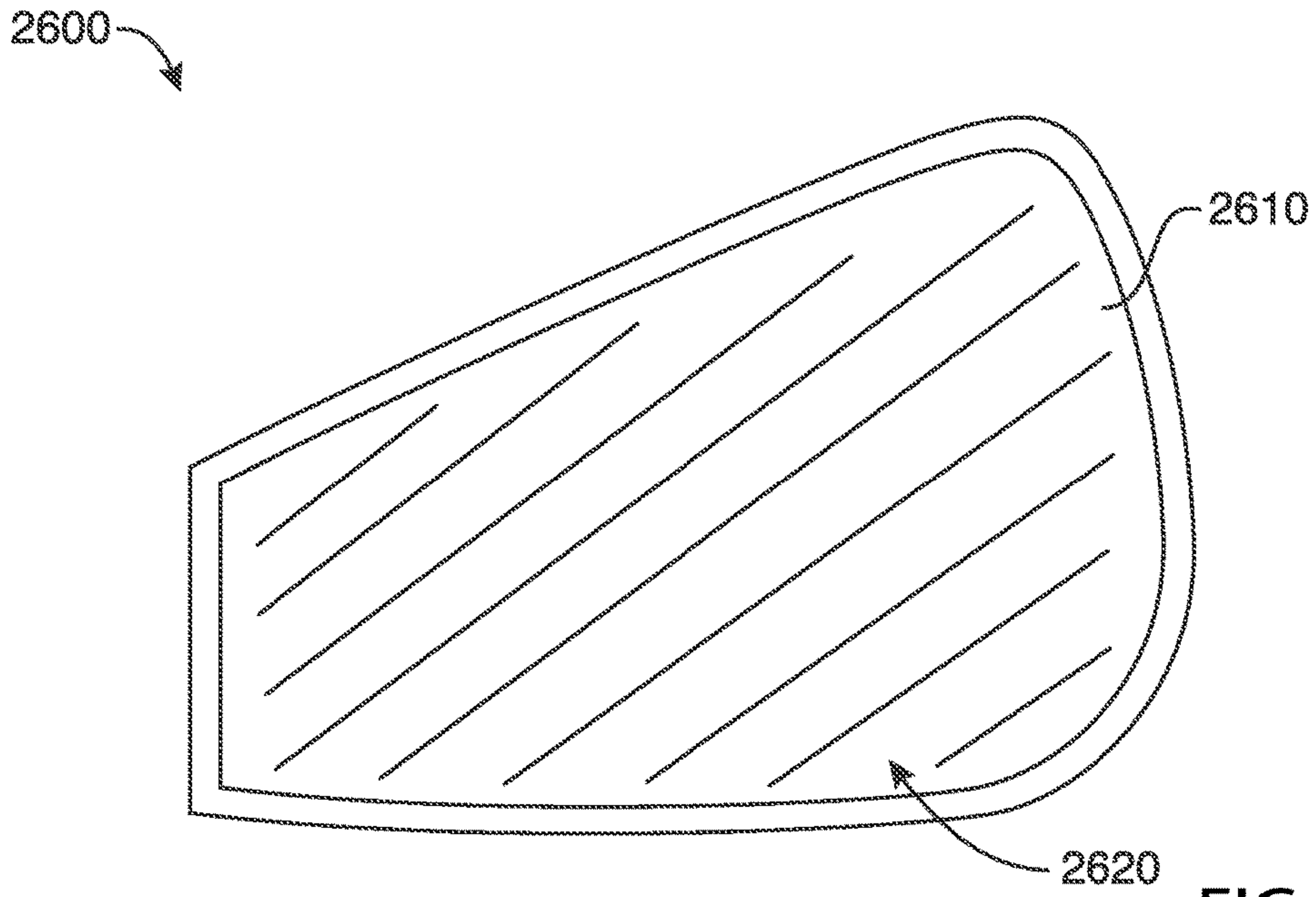


FIG. 26

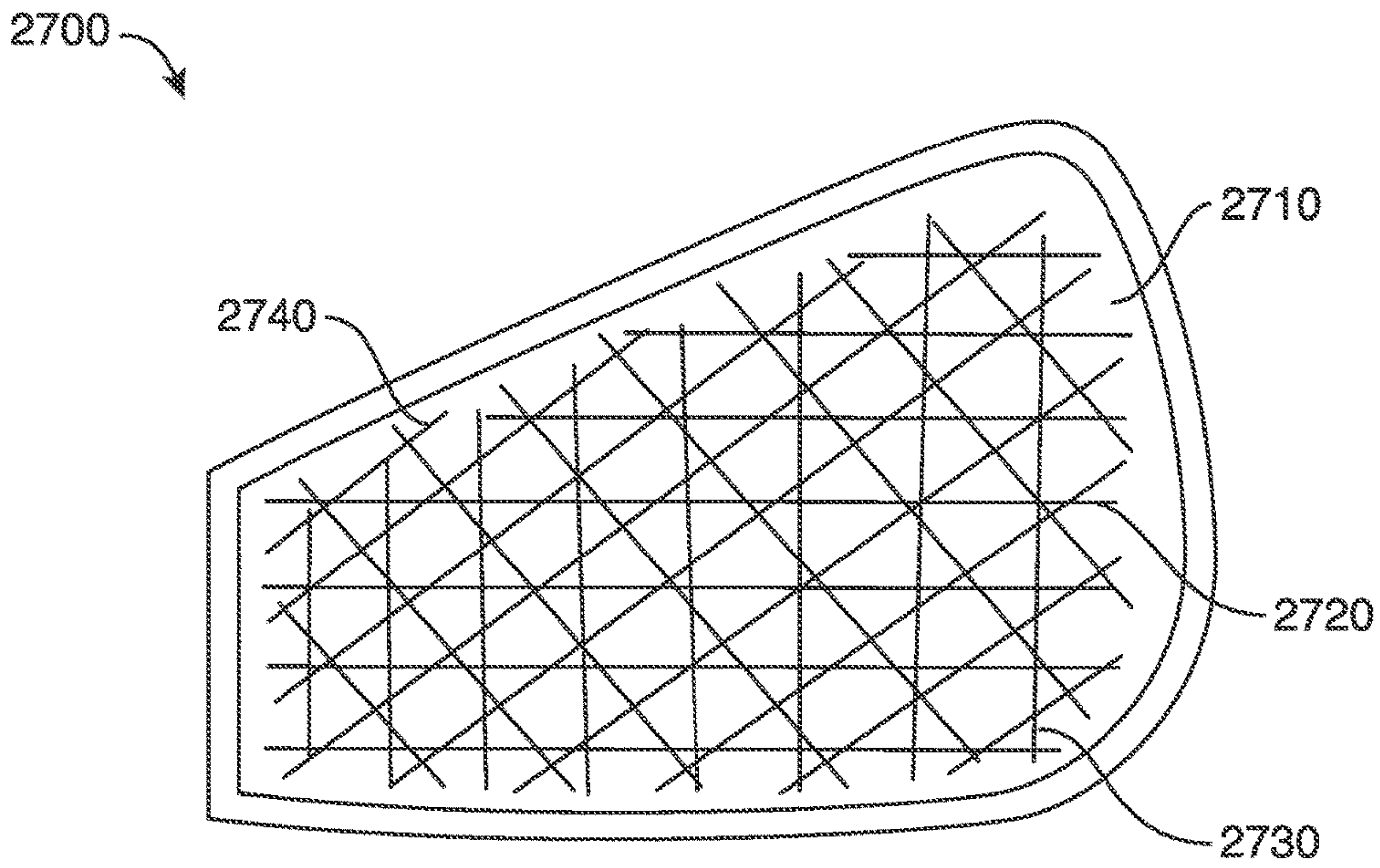


FIG. 27

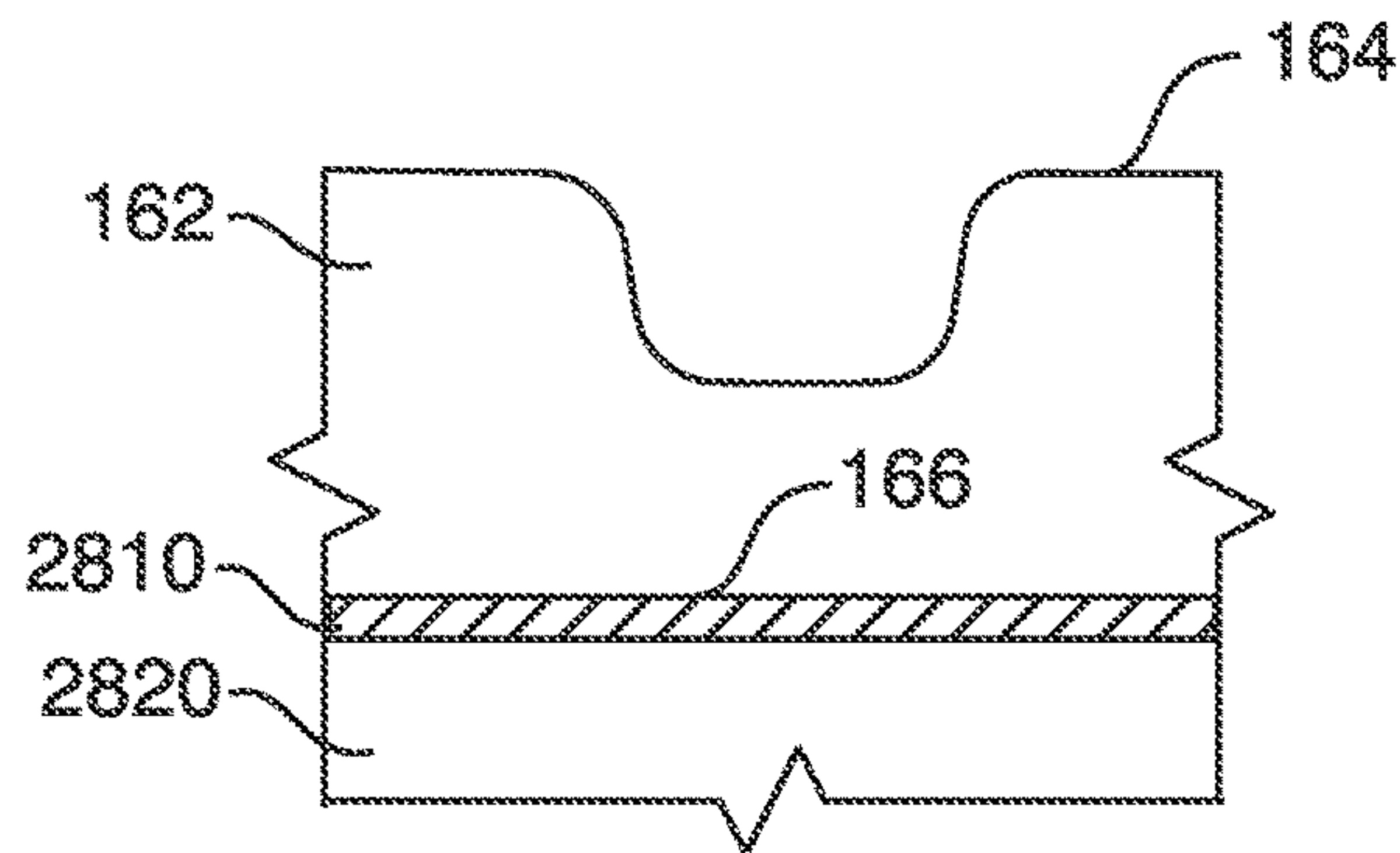


FIG. 28

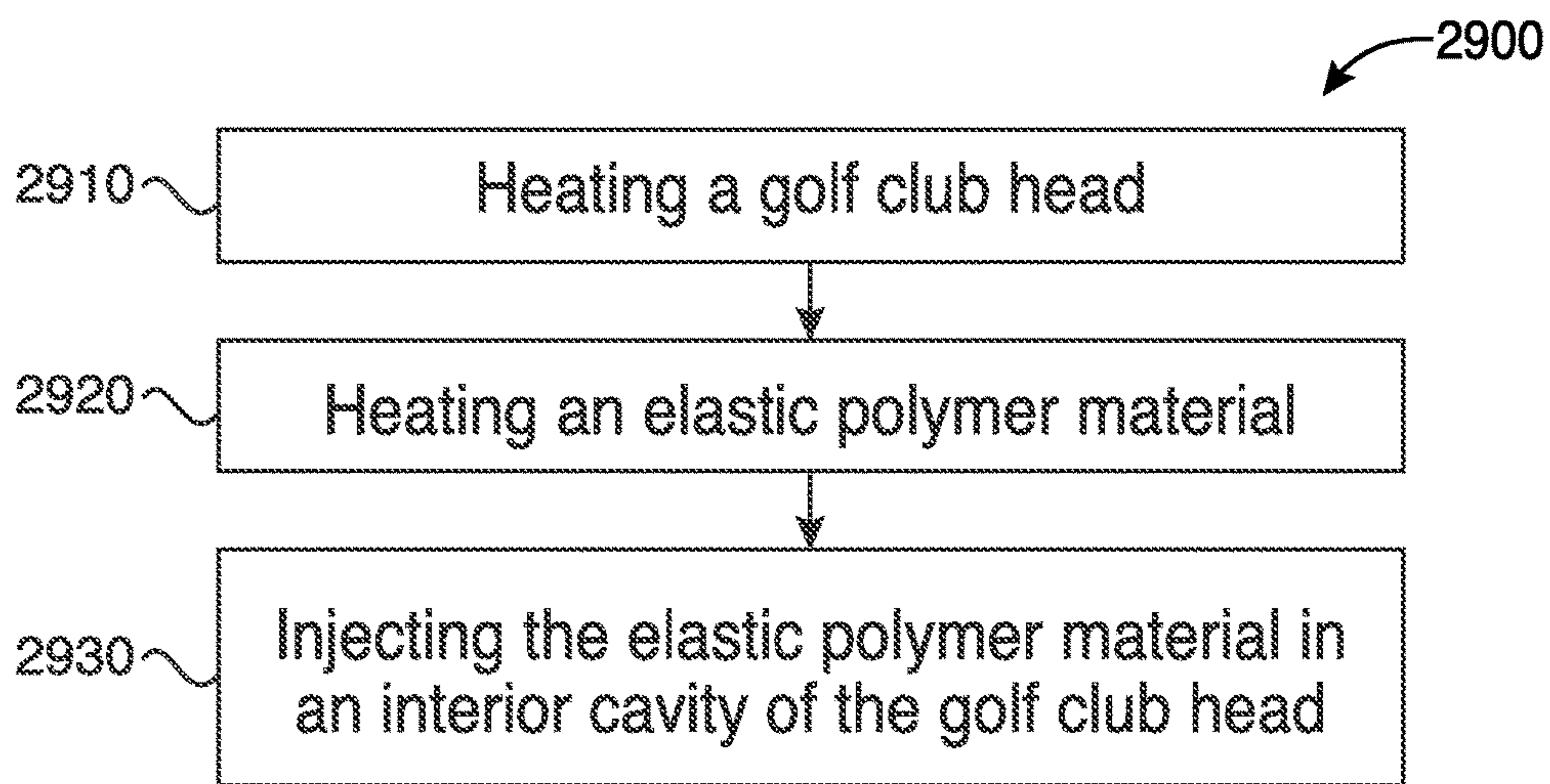


FIG. 29

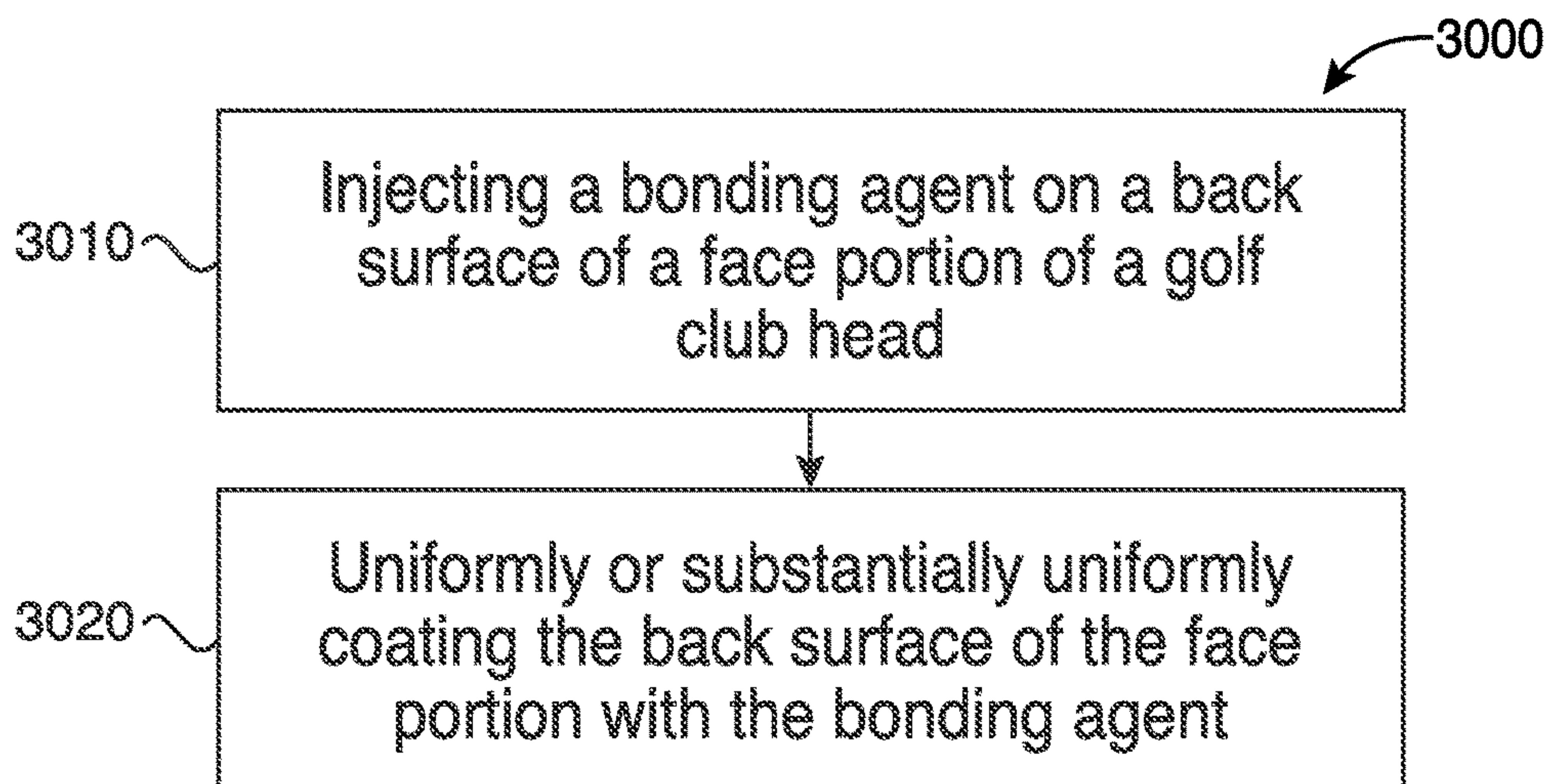


FIG. 30



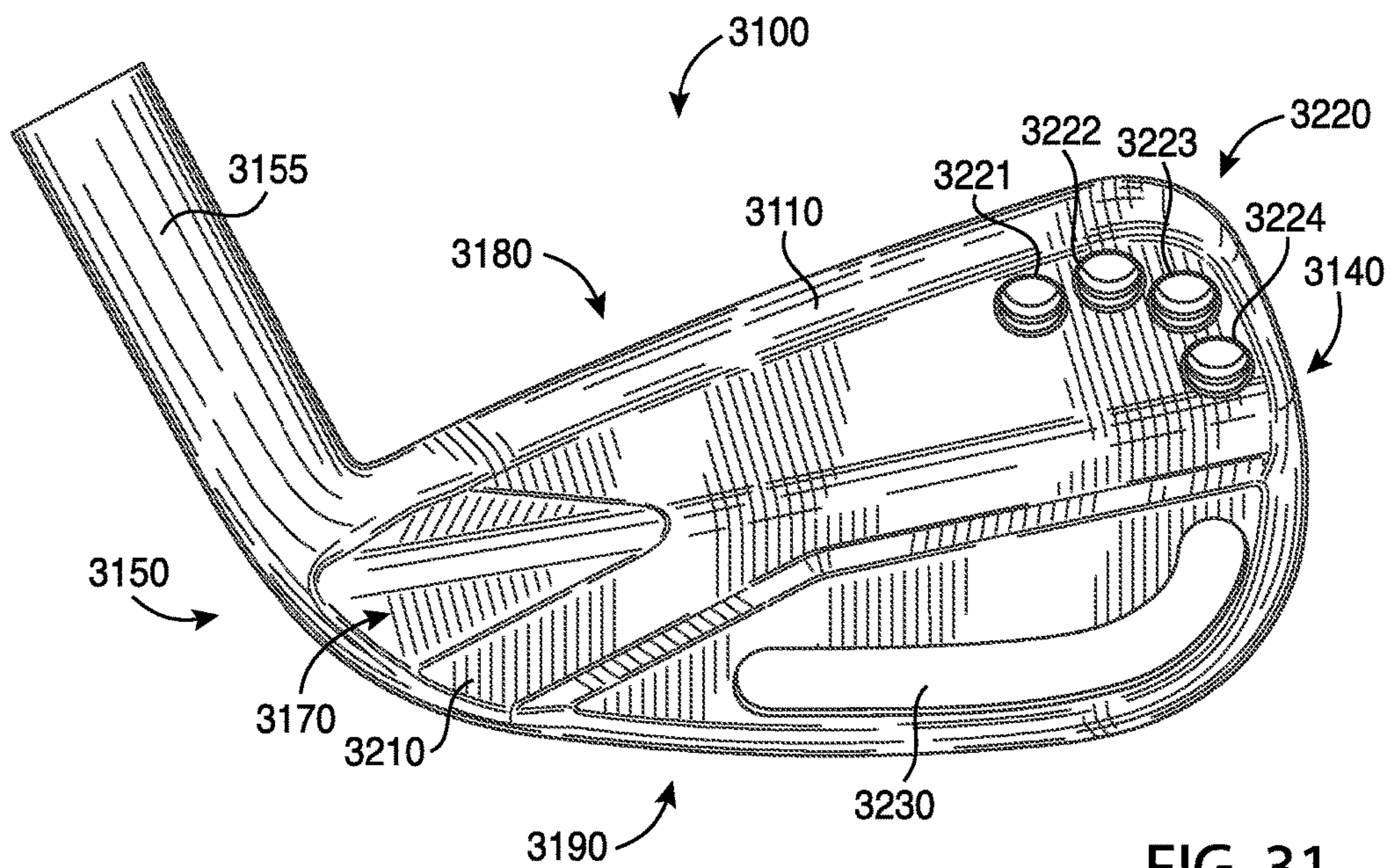


FIG. 31

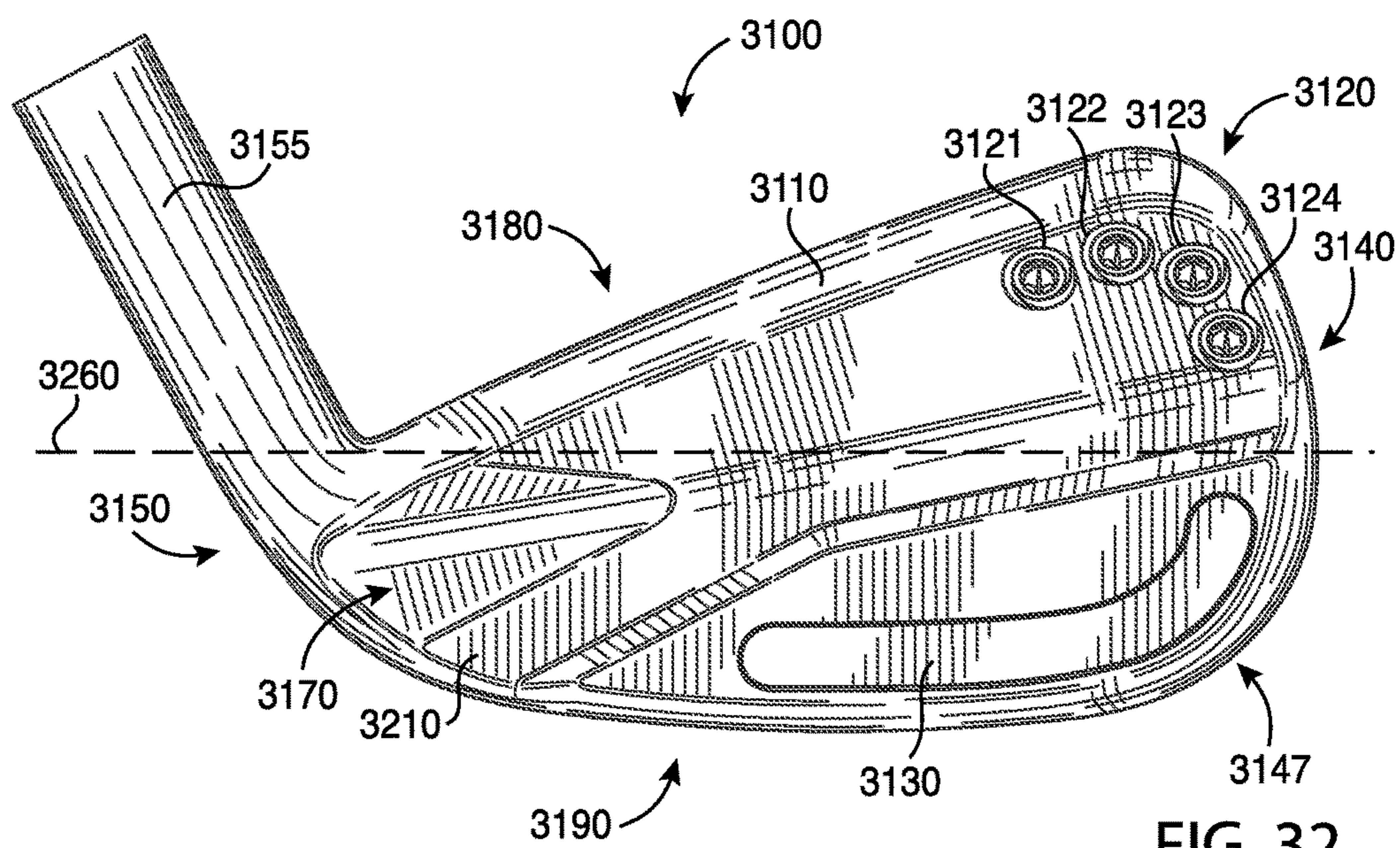
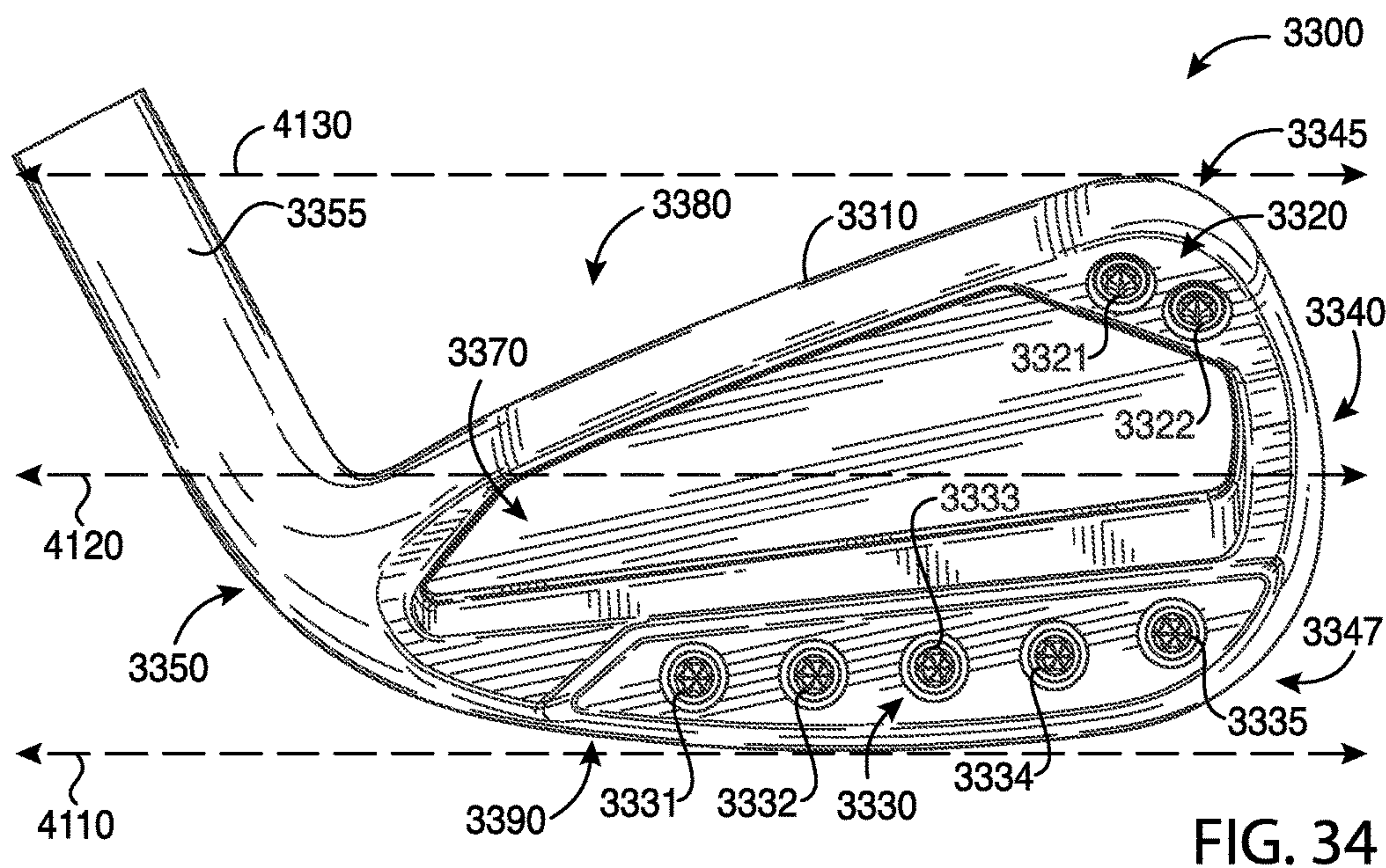
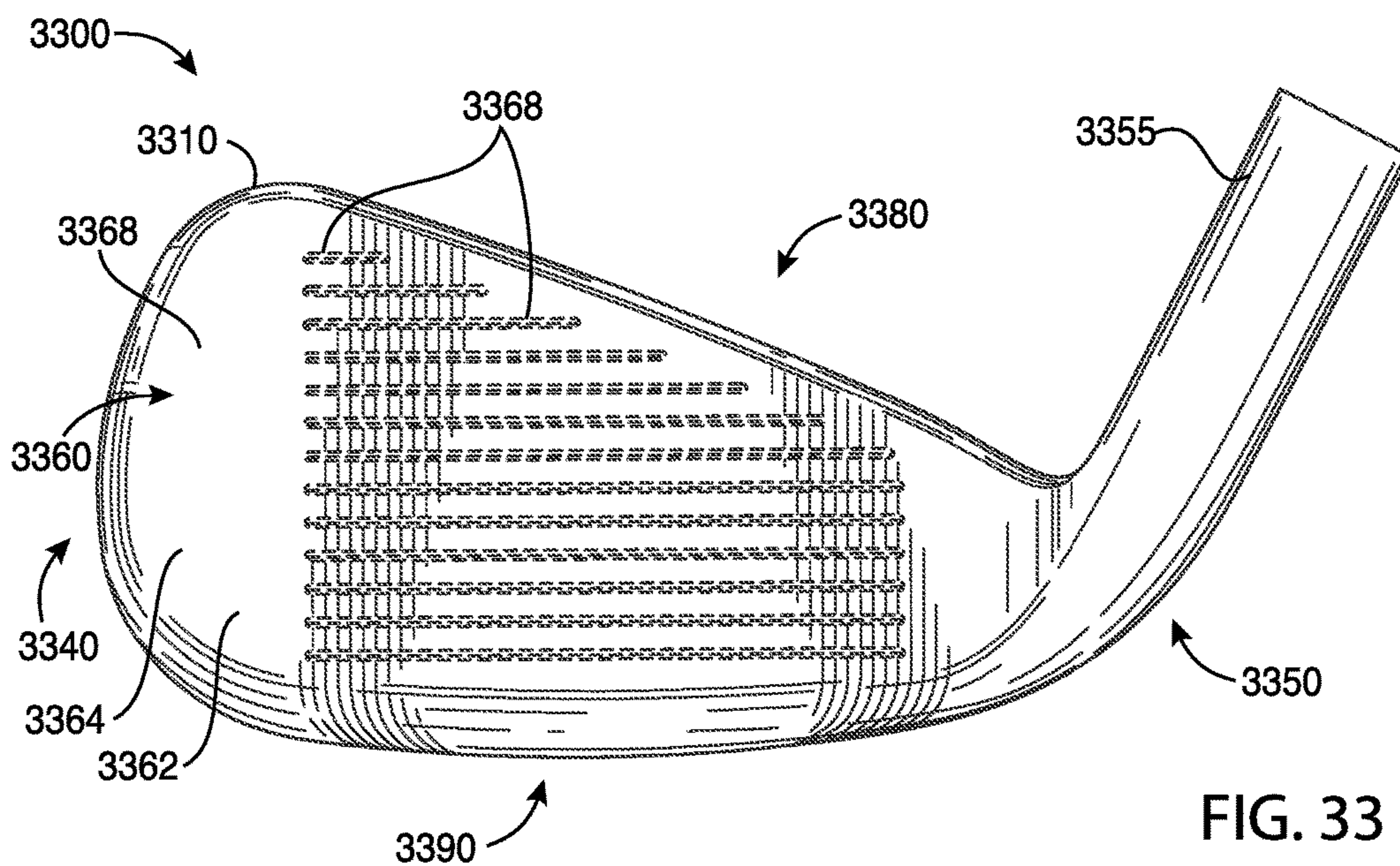


FIG. 32







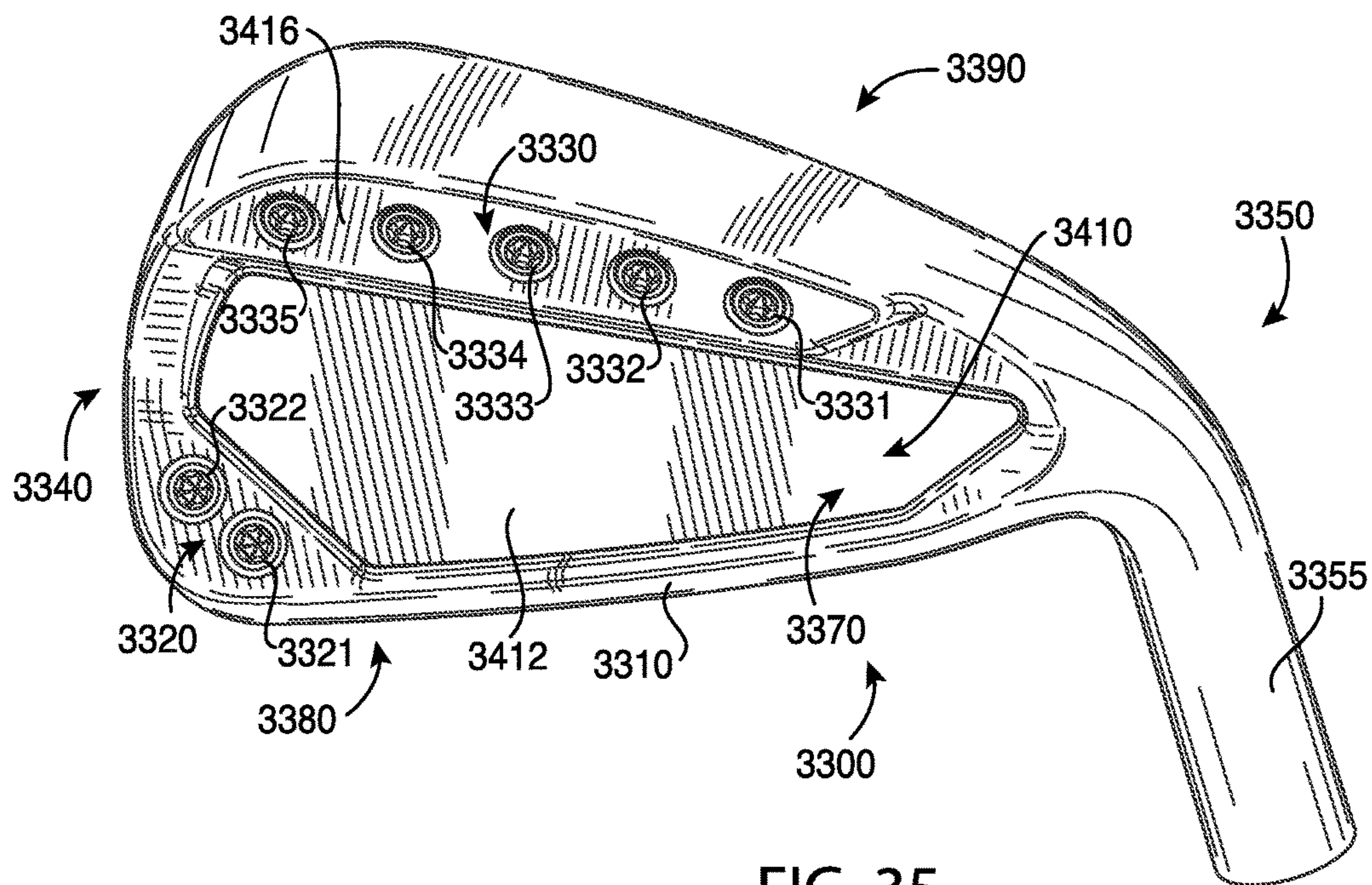


FIG. 35

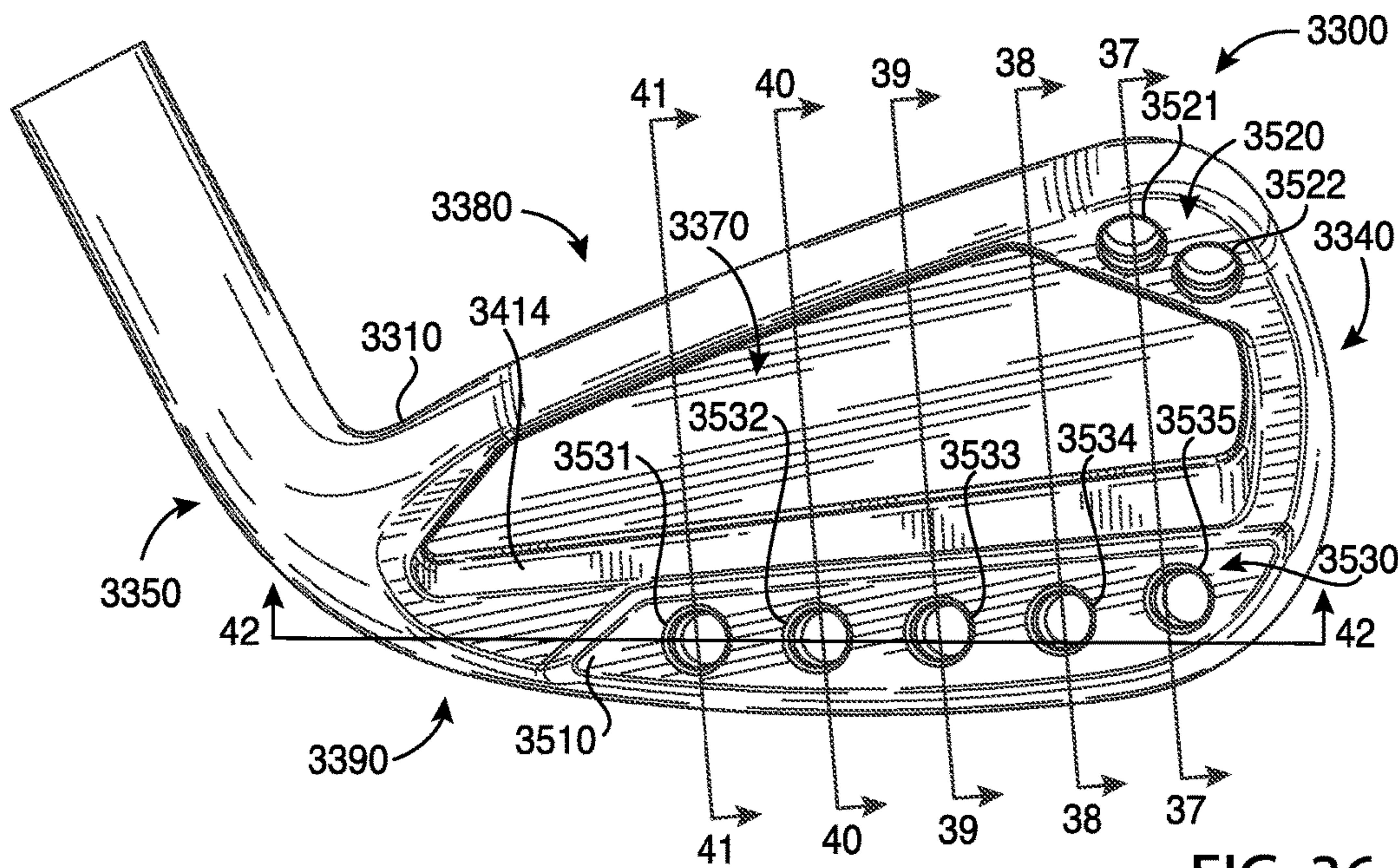


FIG. 36



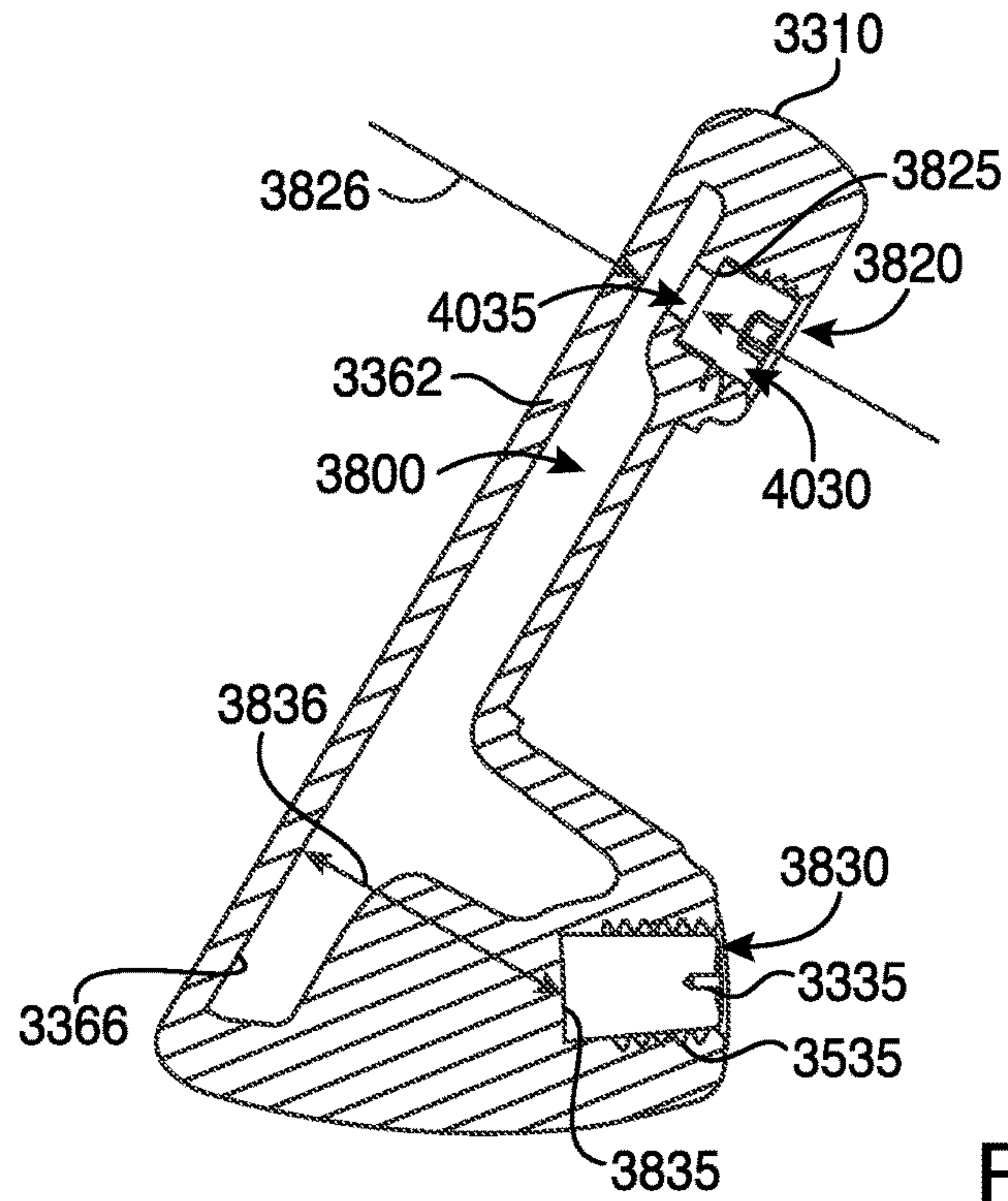


FIG. 37

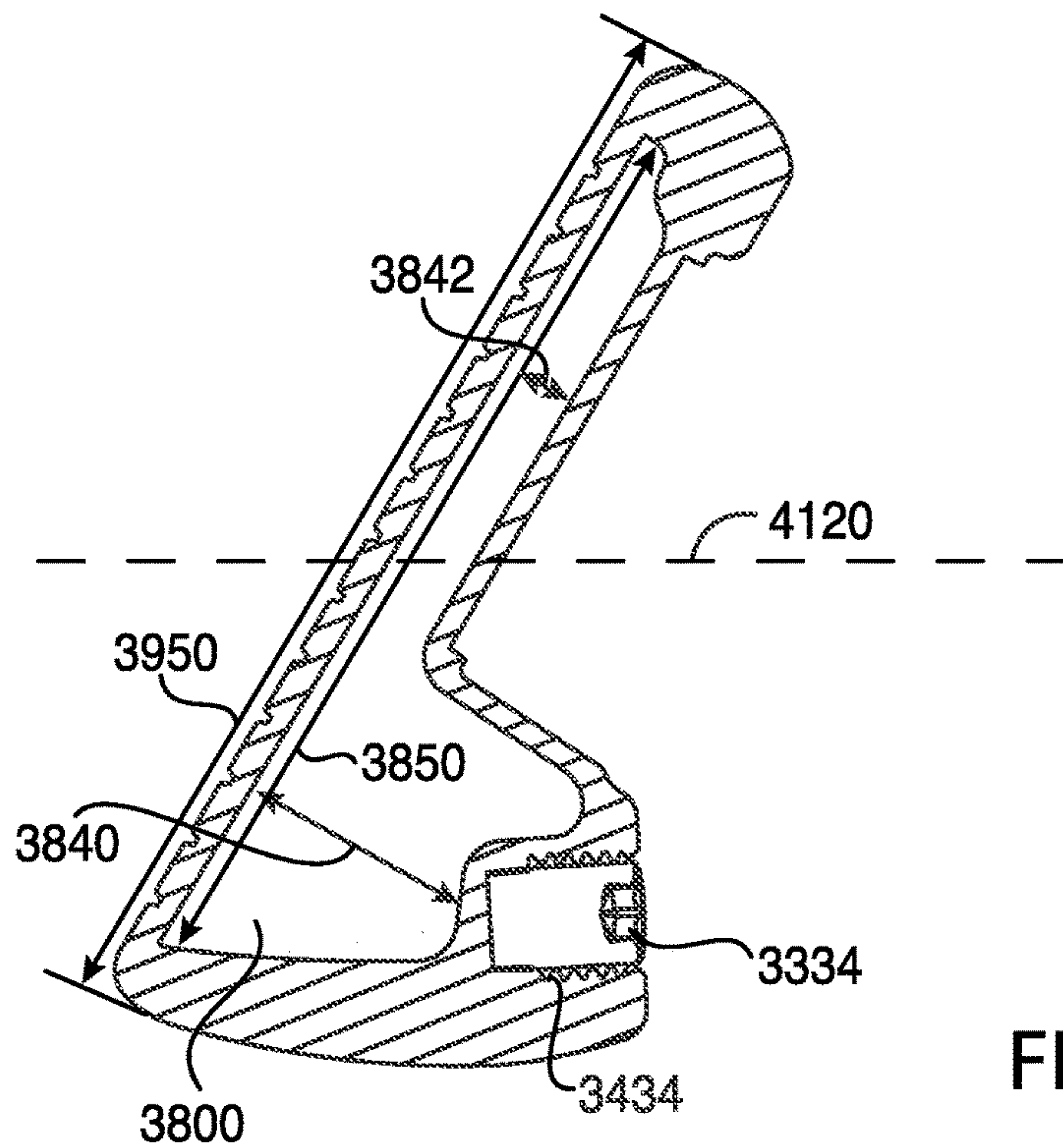


FIG. 38

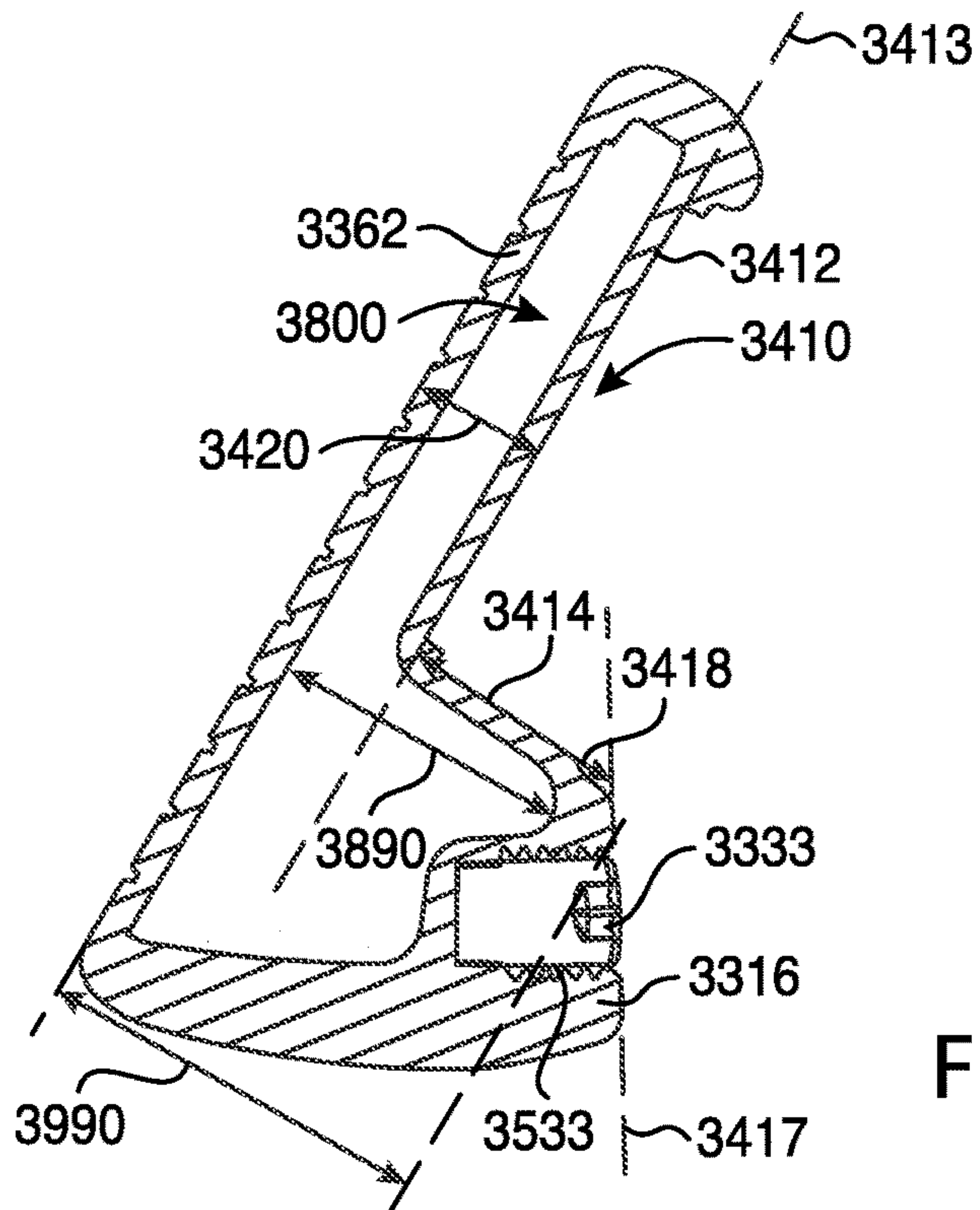


FIG. 39

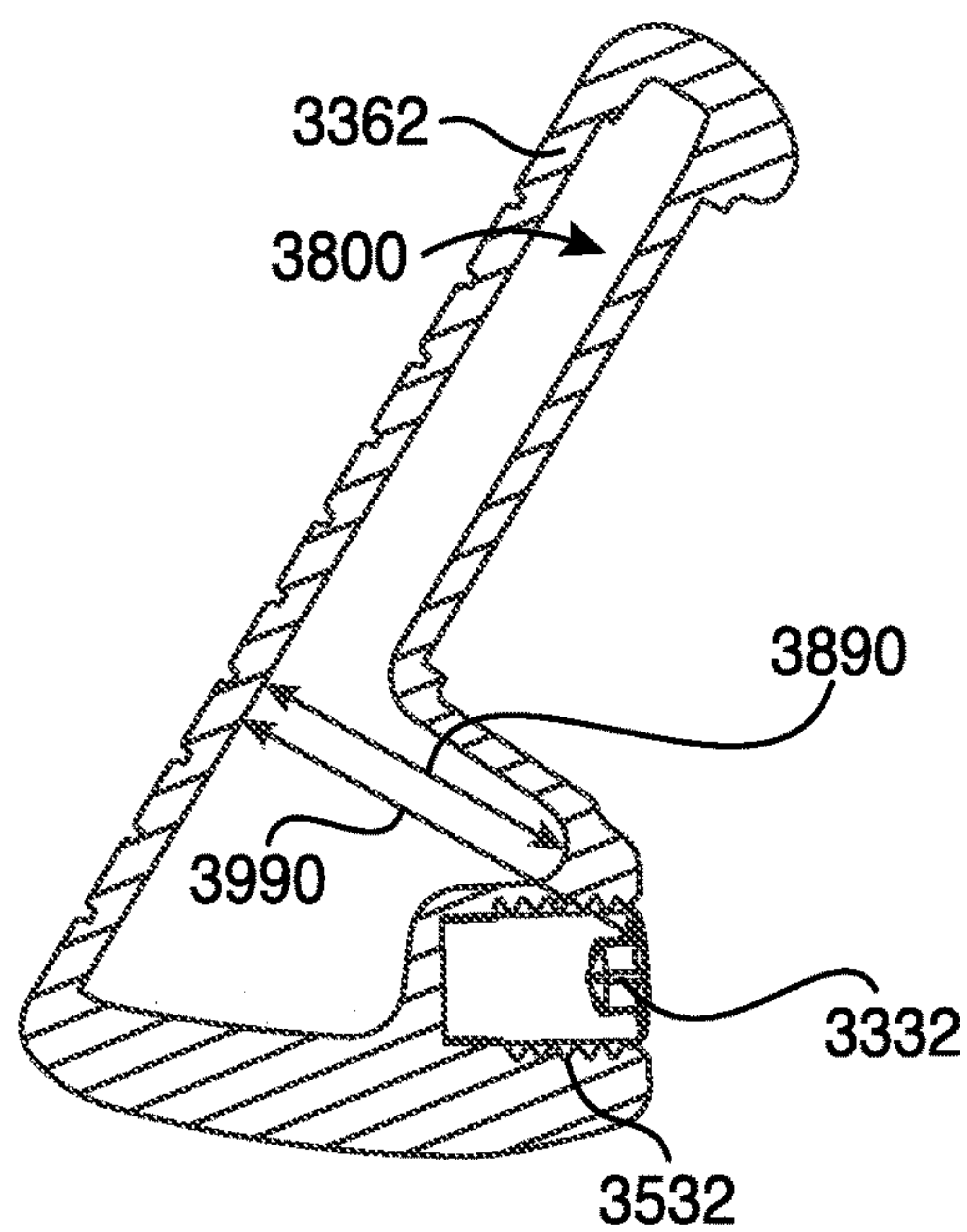


FIG. 40

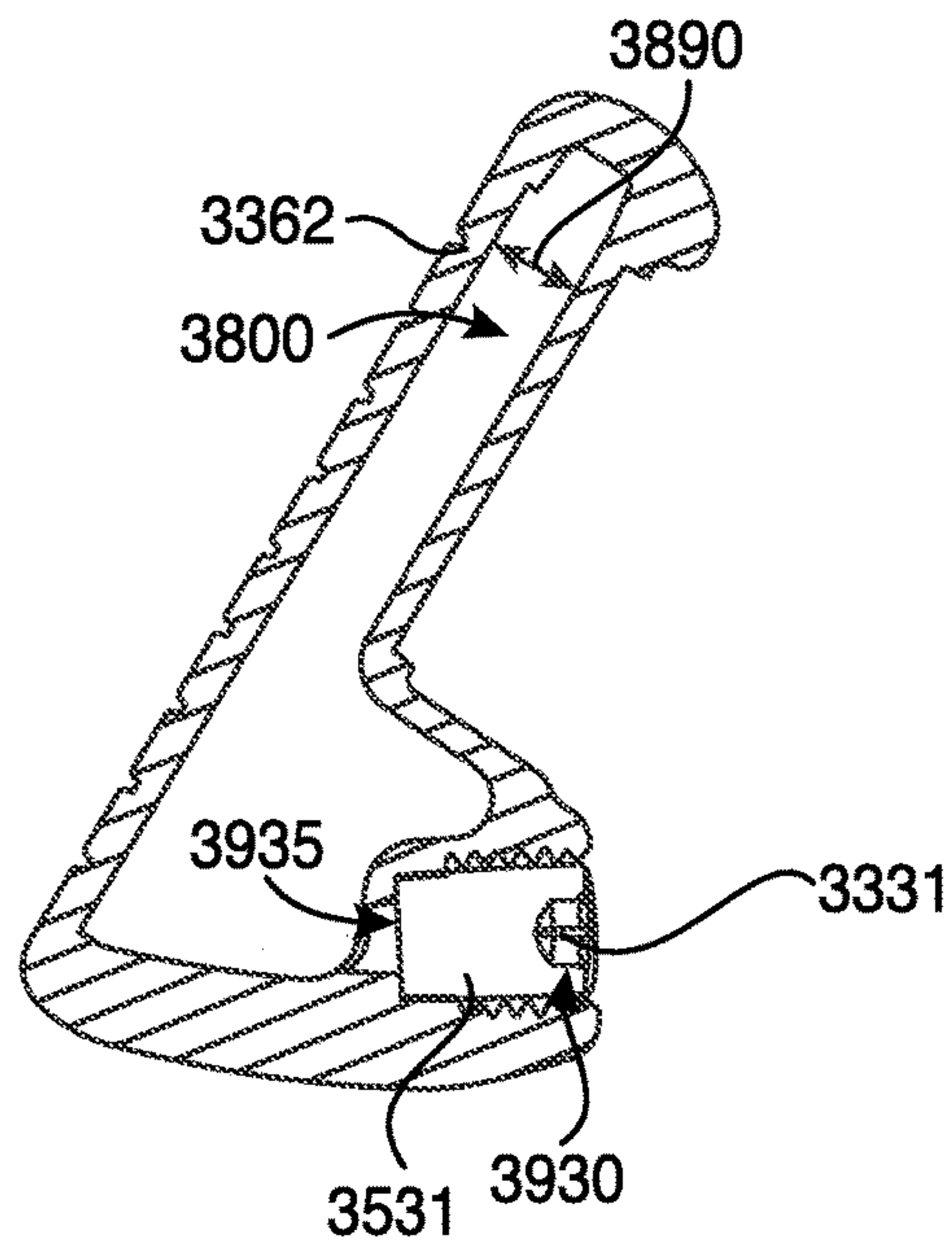


FIG. 41

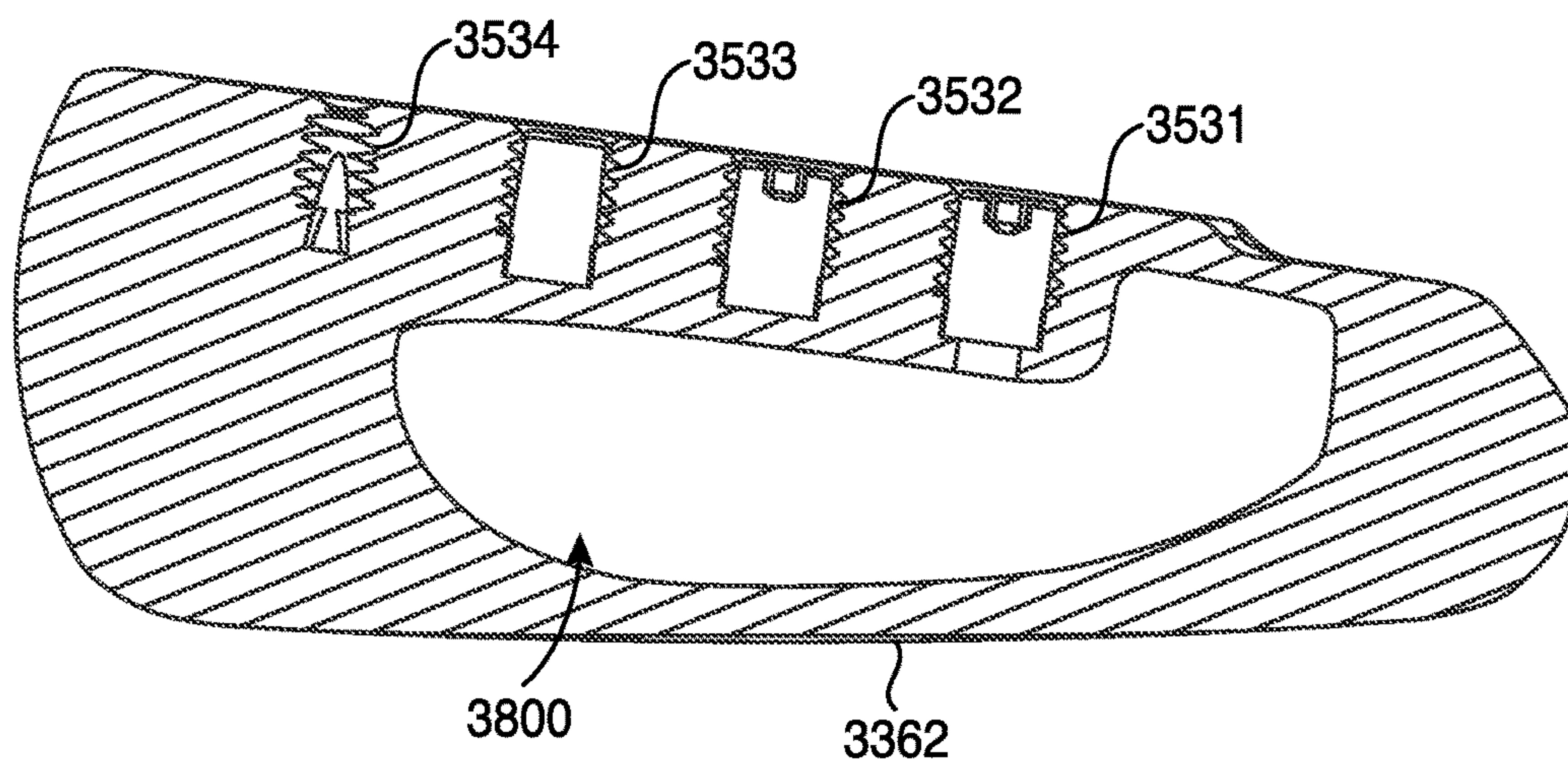


FIG. 42



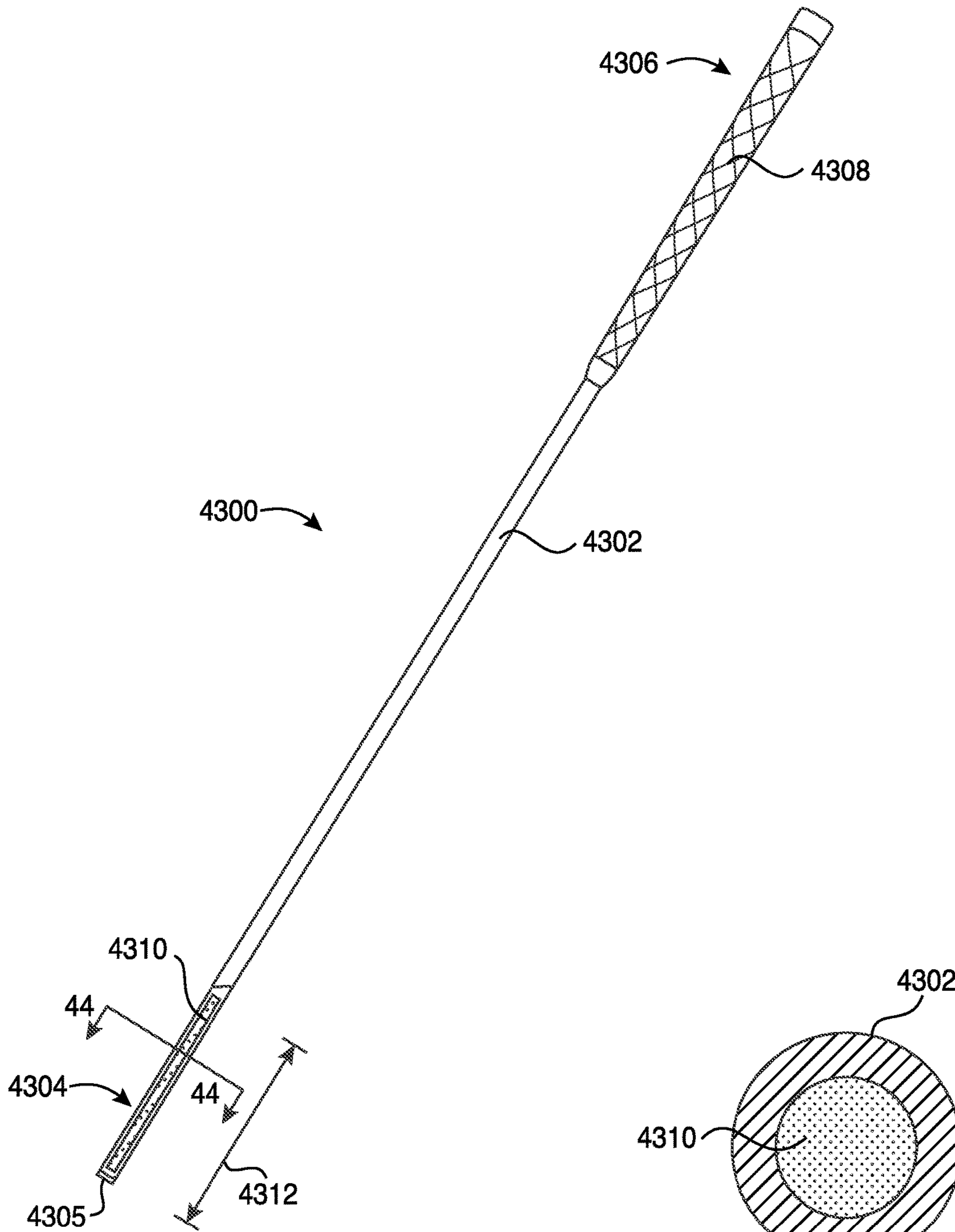


FIG. 43

FIG. 44

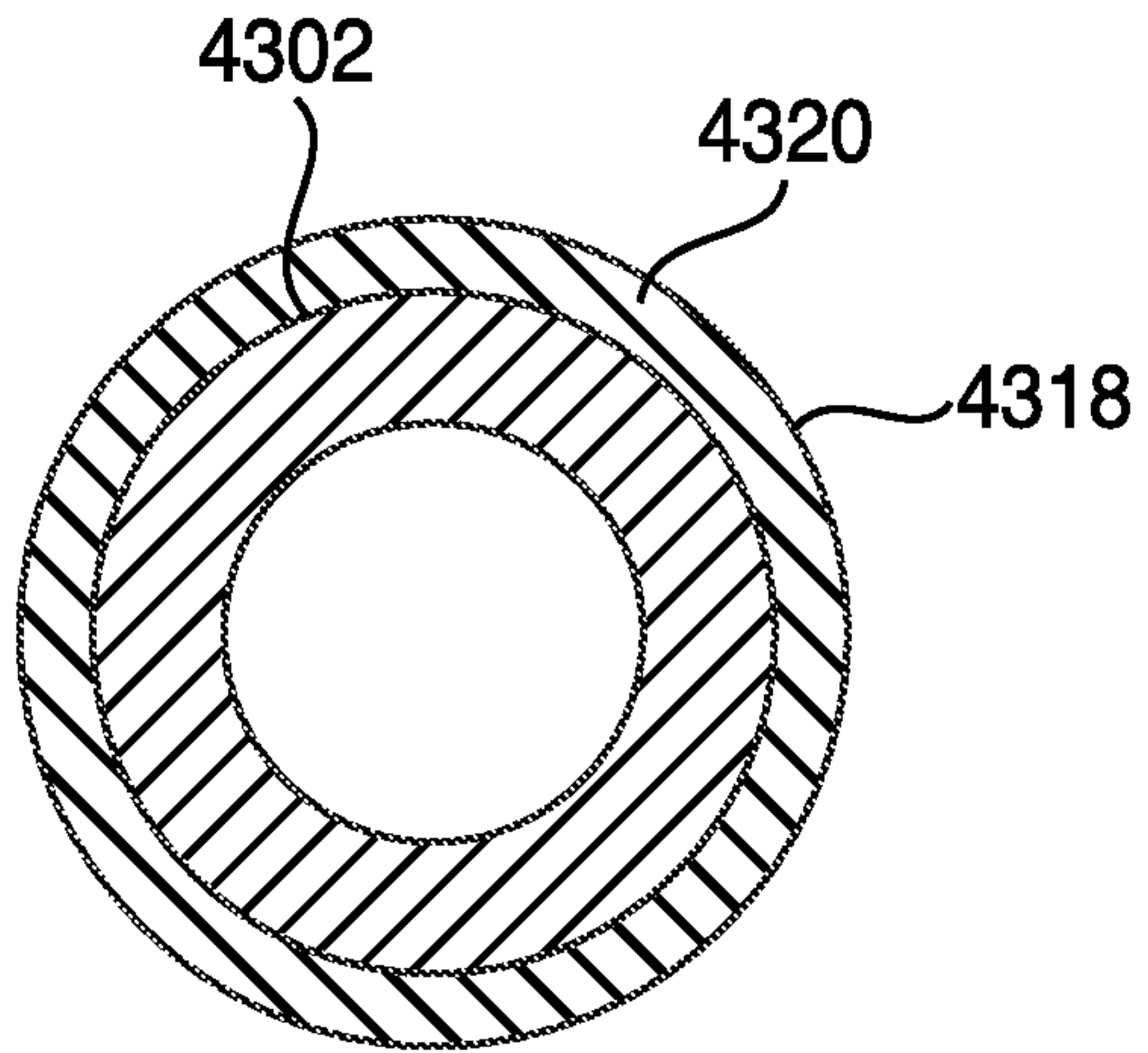


FIG. 45

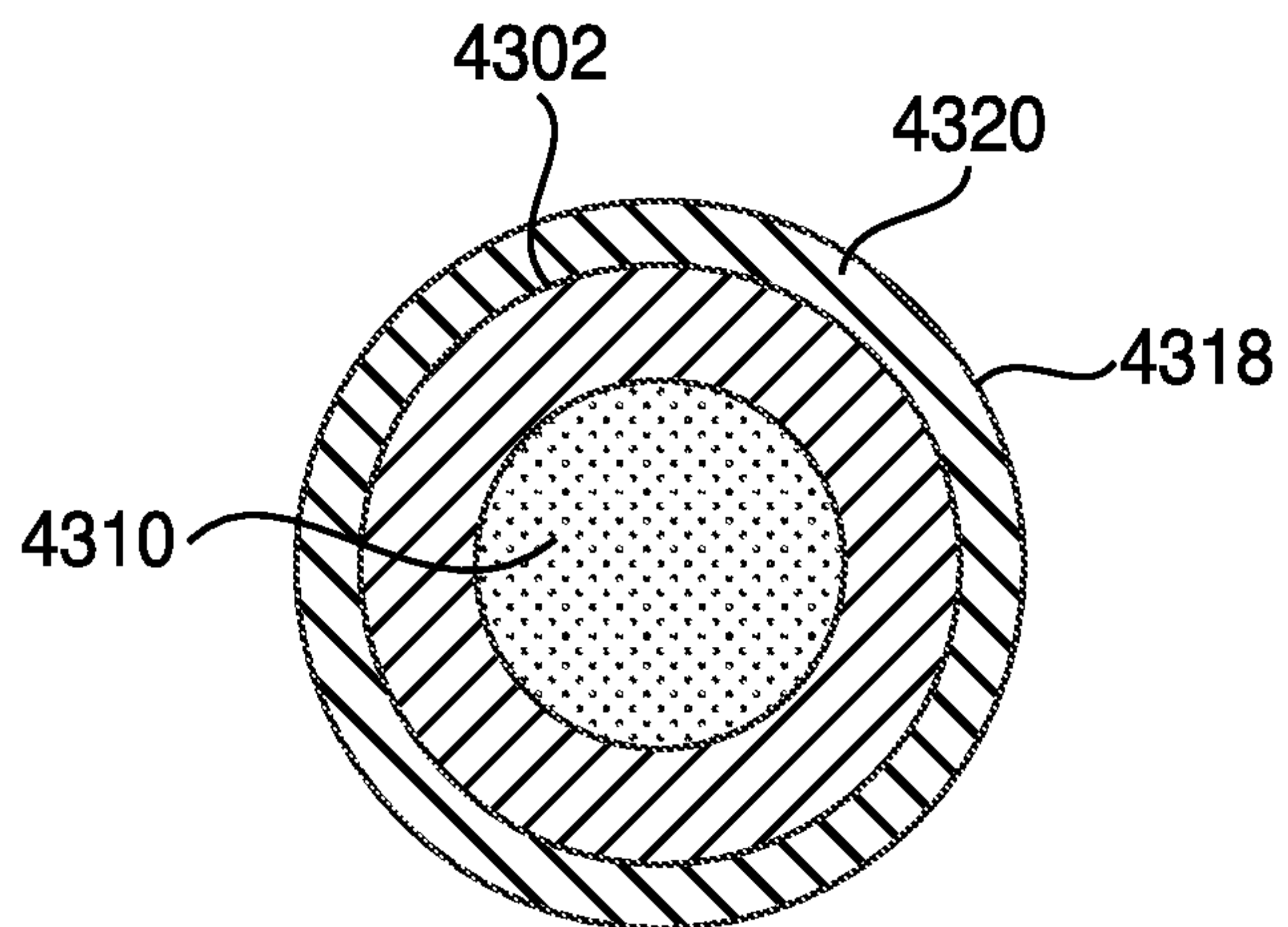
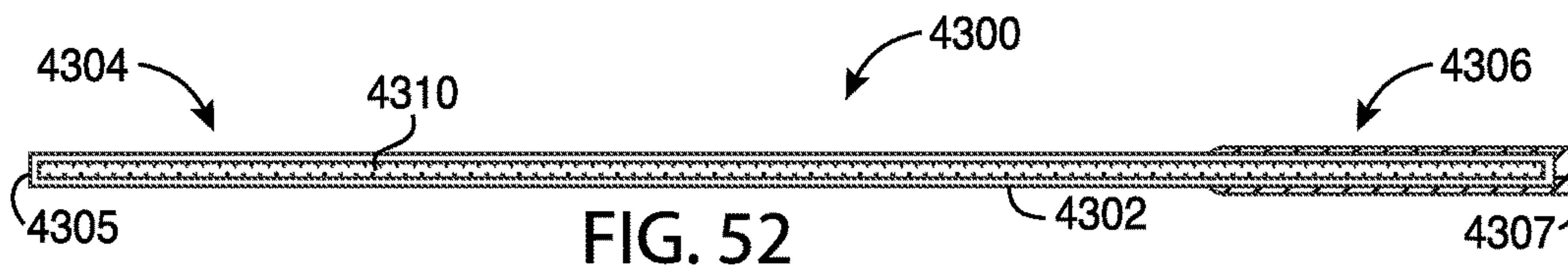
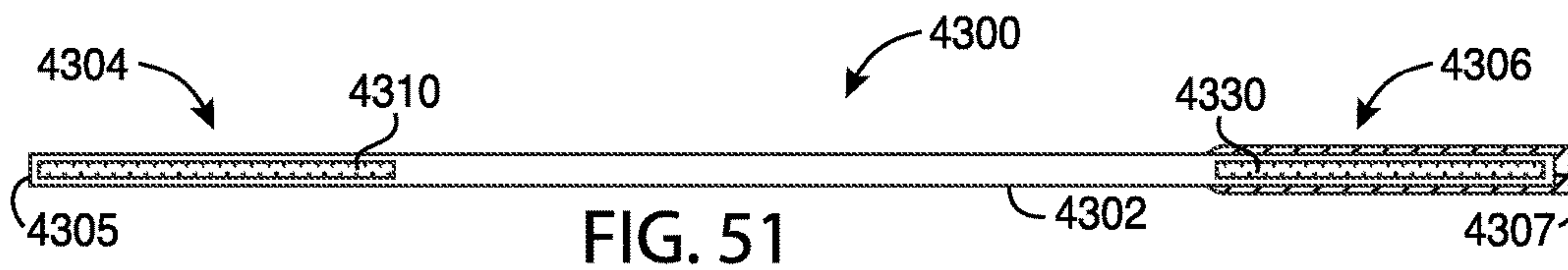
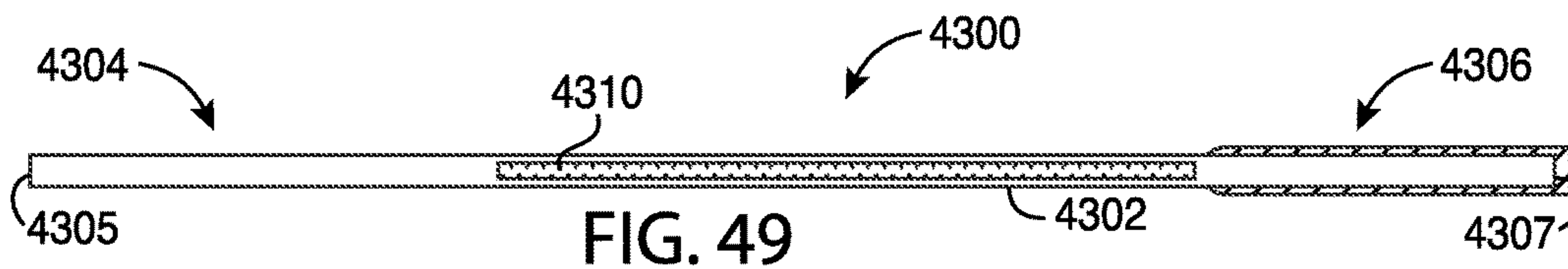
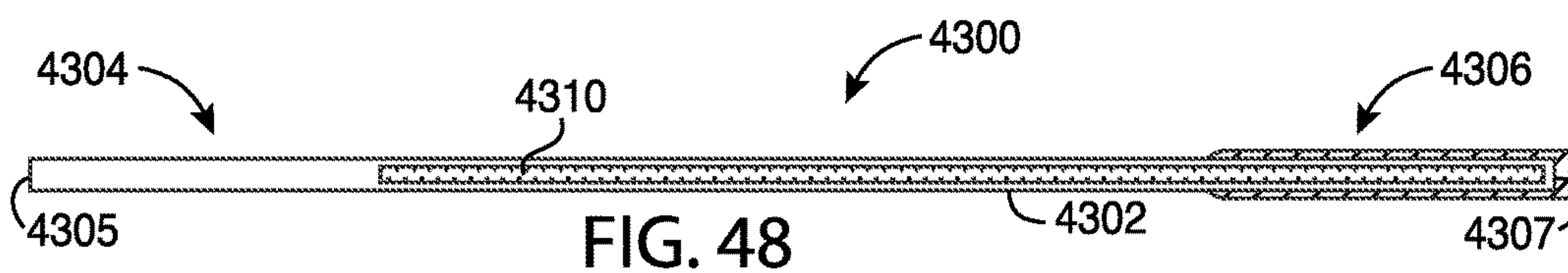
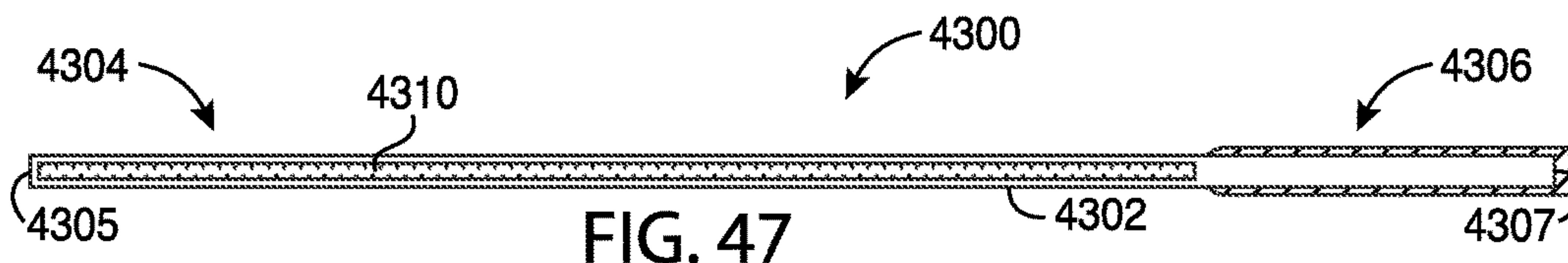


FIG. 46





# GOLF CLUBS AND METHODS TO MANUFACTURE GOLF CLUBS

## REFERENCES

This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application Ser. No. 62/338,390, filed May 18, 2016. This application is also a continuation-in-part of U.S. Nonprovisional application Ser. No. 15/263,018, filed Sep. 12, 2016. The disclosures of the referenced applications are incorporated herein by reference.

## COPYRIGHT AUTHORIZATION

The present disclosure may be subject to copyright protection. The copyright owner has no objection to the facsimile reproduction by anyone of the present disclosure and its related documents, as they appear in the Patent and Trademark Office patent files or records, but otherwise reserves all applicable copyrights.

## FIELD

The present disclosure generally relates to golf equipment, and more particularly, to golf clubs and methods to manufacturing golf clubs.

## BACKGROUND

Various materials (e.g., steel-based materials, titanium-based materials, tungsten-based materials, etc.) may be used to manufacture golf club heads. By using multiple materials to manufacture golf club heads, the position of the center of gravity (CG) and/or the moment of inertia (MOI) of the golf club heads may be optimized to produce certain trajectory and spin rate of a golf ball.

When an individual holds a golf club with a grip located on the shaft of the golf club and strikes a golf ball with the golf club, forces and vibrations due to the impact of the golf club head with the golf ball are transmitted to the hands of the individual through the shaft and the grip.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 depicts a front view of a golf club head according to an embodiment of the apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein.

FIG. 2 depicts a rear view of the example golf club head of FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 depicts a top view of the example golf club head of FIG. 1.

FIG. 4 depicts a bottom view of the example golf club head of FIG. 1.

FIG. 5 depicts a left view of the example golf club head of FIG. 1.

FIG. 6 depicts a right view of the example golf club head of FIG. 1.

FIG. 7 depicts a cross-sectional view of the example golf club head of FIG. 1 along line 7-7.

FIG. 8 depicts a cross-sectional view of the example golf club head of FIG. 1 along line 8-8.

FIG. 9 depicts a cross-sectional view of the example golf club head of FIG. 1 along line 9-9.

FIG. 10 depicts another rear view of the example golf club head of FIG. 1.

FIG. 11 depicts a top view of a weight portion associated with the example golf club head of FIG. 1.

FIG. 12 depicts a side view of a weight portion associated with the example golf club head of FIG. 1.

FIG. 13 depicts a side view of another weight portion associated with the example golf club head of FIG. 1.

FIG. 14 depicts a rear view of a body portion of the example golf club head of FIG. 1.

FIG. 15 depicts a cross-sectional view of a face portion of the example golf club head of FIG. 1.

FIG. 16 depicts a cross-sectional view of another face portion of the example golf club head of FIG. 1.

FIG. 17 depicts one manner in which the example golf club head described herein may be manufactured.

FIG. 18 depicts another cross-sectional view of the example golf club head of FIG. 1 along line 18-18.

FIG. 19 depicts a front view of a face portion of the example golf club head of FIG. 1.

FIG. 20 depicts a back view of the face portion of FIG. 19.

FIG. 21 depicts a cross-sectional view of an example channel of the face portion of FIG. 19.

FIG. 22 depicts a cross-sectional view of another example channel of the face portion of FIG. 19.

FIG. 23 depicts a cross-sectional view of yet another example channel of the face portion of FIG. 19.

FIG. 24 depicts a cross-sectional view of yet another example channel of the face portion of FIG. 19.

FIG. 25 depicts a back view of another example face portion of the example golf club head of FIG. 1.

FIG. 26 depicts a back view of yet another example face portion of the example golf club head of FIG. 1.

FIG. 27 depicts a back view of yet another example face portion of the example golf club head of FIG. 1.

FIG. 28 depicts a cross-sectional view of the example golf club head of FIG. 1.

FIG. 29 depicts another manner in which an example golf club head described herein may be manufactured.

FIG. 30 depicts yet another manner in which an example golf club head described herein may be manufactured.

FIG. 31 depicts a rear view of a golf club head according to an embodiment of the apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein.

FIG. 32 depicts a rear view of the golf club head of FIG. 31.

FIG. 33 depicts a front view of a golf club head according to an embodiment of the apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein.

FIG. 34 depicts a rear view of the example golf club head of FIG. 33.

FIG. 35 depicts a rear perspective view of the example golf club head of FIG. 33.

FIG. 36 depicts a rear view of the example golf club head of FIG. 33.

FIG. 37 depicts a cross-sectional view of the example golf club head of FIG. 33 along line 37-37 of FIG. 36.

FIG. 38 depicts a cross-sectional view of the example golf club head of FIG. 33 along line 38-38 of FIG. 36.

FIG. 39 depicts a cross-sectional view of the example golf club head of FIG. 33 along line 39-39 of FIG. 36.

FIG. 40 depicts a cross-sectional view of the example golf club head of FIG. 33 along line 40-40 of FIG. 36.

FIG. 41 depicts a cross-sectional view of the example golf club head of FIG. 33 along line 41-41 of FIG. 36.

FIG. 42 depicts a cross-sectional view of the example golf club head of FIG. 33 along line 42-42 of FIG. 36.

FIG. 43 depicts a perspective and partial cross-sectional view of an example of a golf club shaft according to an embodiment of the apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein.



FIG. 44 depicts a cross-sectional view of the golf club shaft of FIG. 43 taken at line 44-44 of FIG. 43.

FIG. 45 depicts a cross-sectional view of an example of a golf club shaft according to an embodiment of the apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein.

FIG. 46 depicts a cross-sectional view of an example of a golf club shaft according to an embodiment of the apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein.

FIGS. 47-52 depict cross-sectional views of examples of golf club shafts according to embodiments of the apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein.

For simplicity and clarity of illustration, the drawing figures illustrate the general manner of construction, and descriptions and details of well-known features and techniques may be omitted to avoid unnecessarily obscuring the present disclosure. Additionally, elements in the drawing figures may not be depicted to scale. For example, the dimensions of some of the elements in the figures may be exaggerated relative to other elements to help improve understanding of embodiments of the present disclosure.

### DESCRIPTION

In general, golf club heads and methods to manufacture golf club heads are described herein. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

In the example of FIGS. 1-14, a golf club head 100 may include a body portion 110 (FIG. 14), and two or more weight portions, generally shown as a first set of weight portions 120 (e.g., shown as weight portions 121, 122, 123, and 124) and a second set of weight portions 130 (e.g., shown as weight portions 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, and 137). The body portion 110 may include a toe portion 140, a heel portion 150, a front portion 160, a back portion 170, a top portion 180, and a sole portion 190. The body portion 110 may be made of a first material whereas the first and second sets of weight portions 120 and 130, respectively, may be made of a second material. The first and second materials may be similar or different materials. For example, the body portion 110 may be partially or entirely made of a steel-based material (e.g., 17-4 PH stainless steel, Nitronic® 50 stainless steel, maraging steel or other types of stainless steel), a titanium-based material, an aluminum-based material (e.g., a high-strength aluminum alloy or a composite aluminum alloy coated with a high-strength alloy), any combination thereof, and/or other suitable types of materials. The first and second sets of weight portions 120 and 130, respectively, may be partially or entirely made of a high-density material such as a tungsten-based material or other suitable types of materials. Alternatively, the body portion 110 and/or the first and second sets of weight portions 120 and 130, respectively, may be partially or entirely made of a non-metal material (e.g., composite, plastic, etc.). The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture are not limited in this regard.

The golf club head 100 may be an iron-type golf club head (e.g., a 1-iron, a 2-iron, a 3-iron, a 4-iron, a 5-iron, a 6-iron, a 7-iron, an 8-iron, a 9-iron, etc.) or a wedge-type golf club head (e.g., a pitching wedge, a lob wedge, a sand wedge, an n-degree wedge such as 44 degrees (°), 48°, 52°, 56°, 60°, etc.). Although FIGS. 1-10 may depict a particular type of club head, the apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein may be applicable to other types of club heads (e.g., a driver-type club head, a fairway wood-type club head, a hybrid-type club head, a putter-type club

head, etc.). The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

The toe portion 140 and the heel portion 150 may be on opposite ends of the body portion 110. The heel portion 150 may include a hosel portion 155 configured to receive a shaft (not shown) with a grip (not shown) on one end and the golf club head 100 on the opposite end of the shaft to form a golf club.

The front portion 160 may include a face portion 162 (e.g., a strike face). The face portion 162 may include a front surface 164 and a back surface 166. The front surface 164 may include one or more grooves 168 extending between the toe portion 140 and the heel portion 150. While the figures may depict a particular number of grooves, the apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein may include more or less grooves. The face portion 162 may be used to impact a golf ball (not shown). The face portion 162 may be an integral portion of the body portion 110. Alternatively, the face portion 162 may be a separate piece or an insert coupled to the body portion 110 via various manufacturing methods and/or processes (e.g., a bonding process such as adhesive, a welding process such as laser welding, a brazing process, a soldering process, a fusing process, a mechanical locking or connecting method, any combination thereof, or other suitable types of manufacturing methods and/or processes). The face portion 162 may be associated with a loft plane that defines the loft angle of the golf club head 100. The loft angle may vary based on the type of golf club (e.g., a long iron, a middle iron, a short iron, a wedge, etc.). In one example, the loft angle may be between five degrees and seventy-five degrees. In another example, the loft angle may be between twenty degrees and sixty degrees. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

As illustrated in FIG. 14, the back portion 170 may include a back wall portion 1410 with one or more exterior weight ports along a periphery of the back portion 170, generally shown as a first set of exterior weight ports 1420 (e.g., shown as weight ports 1421, 1422, 1423, and 1424) and a second set of exterior weight ports 1430 (e.g., shown as weight ports 1431, 1432, 1433, 1434, 1435, 1436, and 1437). Each exterior weight port may be associated with a port diameter. In one example, the port diameter may be about 0.25 inch (6.35 millimeters). Any two adjacent exterior weight ports of the first set of exterior weight ports 1420 may be separated by less than the port diameter. In a similar manner, any two adjacent exterior weight ports of the second set of exterior weight ports 1430 may be separated by less than the port diameter. The first and second exterior weight ports 1420 and 1430 may be exterior weight ports configured to receive one or more weight portions. In particular, each weight portion of the first set 120 (e.g., shown as weight portions 121, 122, 123, and 124) may be disposed in a weight port located at or proximate to the toe portion 140 and/or the top portion 180 on the back portion 170. For example, the weight portion 121 may be partially or entirely disposed in the weight port 1421. In another example, the weight portion 122 may be disposed in a weight port 1422 located in a transition region between the top portion 180 and the toe portion 140 (e.g., a top-and-toe transition region). Each weight portion of the second set 130 (e.g., shown as weight portions 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, and 137) may be disposed in a weight port located at or proximate to the toe portion 140 and/or the sole portion 190 on the back portion 170. For example, the weight portion 135 may be partially or entirely disposed in the weight port 1435. In another example, the weight portion 136 may be disposed in



a weight port **1436** located in a transition region between the sole portion **190** and the toe portion **140** (e.g., a sole-and-toe transition region). As described in detail below, the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, may be coupled to the back portion **170** of the body portion **110** with various manufacturing methods and/or processes (e.g., a bonding process, a welding process, a brazing process, a mechanical locking method, any combination thereof, or other suitable manufacturing methods and/or processes).

Alternatively, the golf club head **100** may not include (i) the first set of weight portions **120**, (ii) the second set of weight portions **130**, or (iii) both the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**. In particular, the back portion **170** of the body portion **110** may not include weight ports at or proximate to the top portion **170** and/or the sole portion **190**. For example, the mass of the first set of weight portions **120** (e.g., 3 grams) and/or the mass of the second set of weight portions **130** (e.g., 16.8 grams) may be integral part(s) the body portion **110** instead of separate weight portion(s). The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

The first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, may have similar or different physical properties (e.g., color, shape, size, density, mass, volume, etc.). As a result, the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, may contribute to the ornamental design of the golf club head **100**. In the illustrated example as shown in FIG. **11**, each of the weight portions of the first and second sets **120** and **130**, respectively, may have a cylindrical shape (e.g., a circular cross section). Alternatively, each of the weight portions of the first set **120** may have a first shape (e.g., a cylindrical shape) whereas each of the weight portions of the second set **130** may have a second shape (e.g., a cubical shape). In another example, the first set of weight portions **120** may include two or more weight portions with different shapes (e.g., the weight portion **121** may be a first shape whereas the weight portion **122** may be a second shape different from the first shape). Likewise, the second set of weight portions **130** may also include two or more weight portions with different shapes (e.g., the weight portion **131** may be a first shape whereas the weight portion **132** may be a second shape different from the first shape). Although the above examples may describe weight portions having a particular shape, the apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein may include weight portions of other suitable shapes (e.g., a portion of or a whole sphere, cube, cone, cylinder, pyramid, cuboidal, prism, frustum, or other suitable geometric shape). While the above examples and figures may depict multiple weight portions as a set of weight portions, each set of the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, may be a single piece of weight portion. In one example, the first set of weight portions **120** may be a single piece of weight portion instead of a series of four separate weight portions. In another example, the second set of weight portions **130** may be a single piece of weight portion instead of a series of seven separate weight portions. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

Referring to FIGS. **12** and **13**, for example, the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, may include threads, generally shown as **1210** and **1310**, respectively, to engage with correspondingly configured threads in the weight ports to secure in the weight ports of the back portion **170** (generally shown as **1420** and **1430** in FIG. **14**). For example, each weight portion of the first and

second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, may be a screw. The first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, may not be readily removable from the body portion **110** with or without a tool. Alternatively, the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, may be readily removable (e.g., with a tool) so that a relatively heavier or lighter weight portion may replace one or more of the weight portions of the first and second sets **120** and **130**, respectively. In another example, the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, may be secured in the weight ports of the back portion **170** with epoxy or adhesive so that the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, may not be readily removable. In yet another example, the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, may be secured in the weight ports of the back portion **170** with both epoxy and threads so that the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, may not be readily removable. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

As mentioned above, the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, may be similar in some physical properties but different in other physical properties. As illustrated in FIGS. **11-13**, for example, each of the weight portions of the first and second sets **120** and **130**, respectively, may have a diameter **1110** of about 0.25 inch (6.35 millimeters) but the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, may be different in height. In particular, each of the weight portions of the first set **120** may be associated with a first height **1220** (FIG. **12**), and each of the weight portion of the second set **130** may be associated with a second height **1320** (FIG. **13**). The first height **1220** may be relatively shorter than the second height **1320**. In one example, the first height **1220** may be about 0.125 inch (3.175 millimeters) whereas the second height **1320** may be about 0.3 inch (7.62 millimeters). In another example, the first height **1220** may be about 0.16 inch (4.064 millimeters) whereas the second height **1320** may be about 0.4 inch (10.16 millimeters). Alternatively, the first height **1220** may be equal to or greater than the second height **1320**. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

Referring back to FIG. **10**, for example, the golf club head **100** may be associated with a ground plane **1010**, a horizontal midplane **1020**, and a top plane **1030**. In particular, the ground plane **1010** may be a tangential plane to the sole portion **190** of the golf club head **100** when the golf club head **100** is at an address position (e.g., the golf club head **100** is aligned to strike a golf ball). A top plane **1030** may be a tangential plane to the top portion of the **180** of the golf club head **100** when the golf club head **100** is at the address position. The ground and top planes **1010** and **1030**, respectively, may be substantially parallel to each other. The horizontal midplane **1020** may be vertically halfway between the ground and top planes **1010** and **1030**, respectively.

To provide optimal perimeter weighting for the golf club head **100**, the first set of weight portions **120** (e.g., weight portions **121**, **122**, **123**, and **124**) may be configured to counter-balance the weight of the hosel **155**. For example, as shown in FIG. **10**, the first set of weight portions **120** (e.g., weight portions **121**, **122**, **123** and **124**) may be located near the periphery of the body portion **110** and extend from the top portion to a transition region **145** between the top portion **180** and the toe portion **140**, and from the transition region **145** to the toe portion **140**. In other words, the first set of



weight portions **120** may be located on the golf club head **100** at a generally opposite location relative to the hosel **155**. According to one example, at least a portion of the first set of weight portions **120** may be located near the periphery of the body portion **110** and extend through the transition region **145**. According to another example, at least a portion of the first set of weight portions **120** may extend near the periphery of the body portion **110** and extend along a portion of the top portion **180**. According to another example, at least a portion of the first set of weight portions **120** may extend near the periphery of the body portion **110** and extend along a portion of the toe portion **140**. The first set of weight portions **120** may be above the horizontal midplane **1020** of the golf club head **100**. At least a portion of the first set of weight portions **120** may be near the toe portion **140** to increase the moment of inertia of the golf club head **100** about a vertical axis of the golf club head **100** that extends through the center of gravity of the golf club head **100**. Accordingly, the first set of weight portions **120** may be near the periphery of the body portion **110** and extend through the top portion **180**, the toe portion **140** and/or the transition region **145** to counter-balance the weight of the hosel **155** and/or increase the moment of inertia of the golf club head **100**. The locations of the first set of weight portions **120** (i.e., the locations of the first set of exterior weight ports **1420**) and the physical properties and materials of construction of the weight portions of the first set of weight portions **120** may be determined to optimally affect the weight, weight distribution, center of gravity, moment of inertia characteristics, structural integrity and/or other static and/or dynamic characteristics of the golf club head **100**. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

The second set of weight portions **130** (e.g., weight portions **131**, **132**, **133**, **134**, **135**, **136**, and **137**) may be configured to place the center of gravity of the golf club head **100** at an optimal location and optimize the moment of inertia of the golf club head about a vertical axis that extends through the center of gravity of the golf club head **100**. Referring to FIG. **10**, all or a substantial portion of the second set of weight portions **130** may be generally near the sole portion **190**. For example, the second set of weight portions **130** (e.g., weight portions **131**, **132**, **133**, **134**, **135**, **136**, and **137**) may be near the periphery of the body portion **110** and extend from the sole portion **190** to the toe portion **140**. As shown in the example of FIG. **10**, the weight portions **131**, **132**, **133**, and **134** may be located near the periphery of the body portion **110** and extend along the sole portion **190** to lower the center of gravity of the golf club head **100**. The weight portions **135**, **136** and **137** may be located near the periphery of the body portion **110** and extend from the sole portion **190** to the toe portion **140** through a transition region **147** between the sole portion **190** and the toe portion **140** to lower the center of gravity and increase the moment of inertia of the golf club head **100** about a vertical axis that extends through the center of gravity. To lower the center of gravity of the golf club head **100**, all or a portion of the second set of weight portions **130** may be located closer to the sole portion **190** than to the horizontal midplane **1020**. For example, the weight portions **131**, **132**, **133**, **134**, **135**, and **136** may be closer to the sole portion **190** than to the horizontal midplane **1020**. The locations of the second set of weight portions **130** (i.e., the locations of the second set of exterior weight ports **1430**) and the physical properties and materials of construction of the weight portions of the second set of weight portions **130** may be determined to optimally affect the weight, weight distri-

bution, center of gravity, moment of inertia characteristics, structural integrity and/or other static and/or dynamic characteristics of the golf club head **100**. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

Turning to FIGS. **7-9**, for example, the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, may be located away from the back surface **166** of the face portion **162** (e.g., not directly coupled to each other). That is, the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, and the back surface **166** may be partially or entirely separated by an interior cavity **700** of the body portion **110**. As shown in FIG. **14**, for example, each exterior weight port of the first and second sets of exterior weight ports **1420** and **1430** may include an opening (e.g., generally shown as **720** and **730**) and a port wall (e.g., generally shown as **725** and **735**). The port walls **725** and **735** may be integral portions of the back wall portion **1410** (e.g., a section of the back wall portion **1410**). Each of the openings **720** and **730** may be configured to receive a weight portion such as weight portions **121** and **135**, respectively. The opening **720** may be located at one end of the weight port **1421**, and the port wall **725** may be located or proximate to at an opposite end of the weight port **1421**. In a similar manner, the opening **730** may be located at one end of the weight port **1435**, and the port wall **735** may be located at or proximate to an opposite end of the weight port **1435**. The port walls **725** and **735** may be separated from the face portion **162** (e.g., separated by the interior cavity **700**). The port wall **725** may have a distance **726** from the back surface **166** of the face portion **162** as shown in FIG. **9**. The port wall **735** may have a distance **736** from the back surface **166** of the face portion **162**. The distances **726** and **736** may be determined to optimize the location of the center of gravity of the golf club head **100** when the first and second sets of weight ports **1420** and **1430**, respectively, receive weight portions as described herein. According to one example, the distance **736** may be greater than the distance **726** so that the center of gravity of the golf club head **100** is moved toward the back portion **170**. As a result, a width **740** of a portion of the interior cavity **700** below the horizontal midplane **1020** may be greater than a width **742** of the interior cavity **700** above the horizontal midplane **1020**. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

As discussed herein, the center of gravity (CG) of the golf club head **100** may be relatively farther back away from the face portion **162** and relatively lower towards a ground plane (e.g., one shown as **1010** in FIG. **10**) with all or a substantial portion of the second set of weight portions **130** being closer to the sole portion **190** than to the horizontal midplane **1020** and the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively being away from the back surface **166** than if the second set of weight portions **130** were directly coupled to the back surface **166**. The locations of the first and second sets of weight ports **1420** and **1430** and the physical properties and materials of construction of the weight portions of the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, may be determined to optimally affect the weight, weight distribution, center of gravity, moment of inertia characteristics, structural integrity and/or other static and/or dynamic characteristics of the golf club head **100**. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

While the figures may depict weight ports with a particular cross-section shape, the apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein may include weight ports



with other suitable cross-section shapes. In one example, the weight ports of the first and/or second sets of weight ports **1420** and **1430** may have U-like cross-section shape. In another example, the weight ports of the first and/or second set of weight ports **1420** and **1430** may have V-like cross-section shape. One or more of the weight ports associated with the first set of weight portions **120** may have a different cross-section shape than one or more weight ports associated with the second set of weight portions **130**. For example, the weight port **1421** may have a U-like cross-section shape whereas the weight port **1435** may have a V-like cross-section shape. Further, two or more weight ports associated with the first set of weight portions **120** may have different cross-section shapes. In a similar manner, two or more weight ports associated with the second set of weight portions **130** may have different cross-section shapes. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

The first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, may be similar in mass (e.g., all of the weight portions of the first and second sets **120** and **130**, respectively, weigh about the same). Alternatively, the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, may be different in mass individually or as an entire set. In particular, each of the weight portions of the first set **120** (e.g., shown as **121**, **122**, **123**, and **124**) may have relatively less mass than any of the weight portions of the second set **130** (e.g., shown as **131**, **132**, **133**, **134**, **135**, **136**, and **137**). For example, the second set of weight portions **130** may account for more than 50% of the total mass from exterior weight portions of the golf club head **100**. As a result, the golf club head **100** may be configured to have at least 50% of the total mass from exterior weight portions disposed below the horizontal midplane **1020**. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

In one example, the golf club head **100** may have a mass in the range of about 220 grams to about 330 grams based on the type of golf club (e.g., a 4-iron versus a lob wedge). The body portion **110** may have a mass in the range of about 200 grams to about 310 grams with the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, having a mass of about 20 grams (e.g., a total mass from exterior weight portions). Each of the weight portions of the first set **120** may have a mass of about one gram (1.0 g) whereas each of the weight portions of the second set **130** may have a mass of about 2.4 grams. The sum of the mass of the first set of weight portions **120** may be about 3 grams whereas the sum of the mass of the first set of weight portions **130** may be about 16.8 grams. The total mass of the second set of weight portions **130** may weigh more than five times as much as the total mass of the first set of weight portions **120** (e.g., a total mass of the second set of weight portions **130** of about 16.8 grams versus a total mass of the first set of weight portions **120** of about 3 grams). The golf club head **100** may have a total mass of 19.8 grams from the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively (e.g., sum of 3 grams from the first set of weight portions **120** and 16.8 grams from the second set of weight portions **130**). Accordingly, the first set of weight portions **120** may account for about 15% of the total mass from exterior weight portions of the golf club head **100** whereas the second set of weight portions **130** may account for about 85% of the total mass from exterior weight portions of the golf club head **100**. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

By coupling the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, to the body portion **110** (e.g., securing the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130** in the weight ports on the back portion **170**), the location of the center of gravity (CG) and the moment of inertia (MOI) of the golf club head **100** may be optimized. In particular, as described herein, the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, may lower the location of the CG towards the sole portion **190** and further back away from the face portion **162**. Further, the MOI may be higher as measured about a vertical axis extending through the CG (e.g., perpendicular to the ground plane **1010**). The MOI may also be higher as measured about a horizontal axis extending through the CG (e.g., extending towards the toe and heel portions **150** and **160**, respectively, of the golf club head **100**). As a result, the club head **100** may provide a relatively higher launch angle and a relatively lower spin rate than a golf club head without the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

Alternatively, two or more weight portions in the same set may be different in mass. In one example, the weight portion **121** of the first set **120** may have a relatively lower mass than the weight portion **122** of the first set **120**. In another example, the weight portion **131** of the second set **130** may have a relatively lower mass than the weight portion **135** of the second set **130**. With relatively greater mass at the top-and-toe transition region and/or the sole-and-toe transition region, more weight may be distributed away from the center of gravity (CG) of the golf club head **100** to increase the moment of inertia (MOI) about the vertical axis through the CG.

Although the figures may depict the weight portions as separate and individual parts, each set of the first and second sets of weight portions **120** and **130**, respectively, may be a single piece of weight portion. In one example, all of the weight portions of the first set **120** (e.g., shown as **121**, **122**, **123**, and **124**) may be combined into a single piece of weight portion (e.g., a first weight portion). In a similar manner, all of the weight portions of the second set **130** (e.g., **131**, **132**, **133**, **134**, **135**, **136**, and **137**) may be combined into a single piece of weight portion as well (e.g., a second weight portion). In this example, the golf club head **100** may have only two weight portions. While the figures may depict a particular number of weight portions, the apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein may include more or less number of weight portions. In one example, the first set of weight portions **120** may include two separate weight portions instead of three separate weight portions as shown in the figures. In another example, the second set of weight portions **130** may include five separate weight portions instead of seven separate weight portions as shown in the figures. Alternatively as mentioned above, the apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein may not include any separate weight portions (e.g., the body portion **110** may be manufactured to include the mass of the separate weight portions as integral part(s) of the body portion **110**). The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

Referring back to FIGS. 7-9, for example, the body portion **110** may be a hollow body including the interior cavity **700** extending between the front portion **160** and the back portion **170**. Further, the interior cavity **700** may extend between the top portion **180** and the sole portion **190**. The interior cavity **700** may be associated with a cavity height



750 ( $H_C$ ), and the body portion 110 may be associated with a body height 850 ( $H_B$ ). While the cavity height 750 and the body height 850 may vary between the toe and heel portions 140 and 150, the cavity height 750 may be at least 50% of a body height 850 ( $H_C > 0.5 * H_B$ ). For example, the cavity height 750 may vary between 70-85% of the body height 850. With the cavity height 750 of the interior cavity 700 being greater than 50% of the body height 850, the golf club head 100 may produce relatively more consistent feel, sound, and/or result when the golf club head 100 strikes a golf ball via the face portion 162 than a golf club head with a cavity height of less than 50% of the body height. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

In one example, the interior cavity 700 may be unfilled (i.e., empty space). The body portion 110 with the interior cavity 700 may weight about 100 grams less than the body portion 110 without the interior cavity 700. Alternatively, the interior cavity 700 may be partially or entirely filled with an elastic polymer or elastomer material (e.g., a viscoelastic urethane polymer material such as Sorbothane® material manufactured by Sorbothane, Inc., Kent, Ohio), a thermoplastic elastomer material (TPE), a thermoplastic polyurethane material (TPU), and/or other suitable types of materials to absorb shock, isolate vibration, and/or dampen noise. For example, at least 50% of the interior cavity 700 may be filled with a TPE material to absorb shock, isolate vibration, and/or dampen noise when the golf club head 100 strikes a golf ball via the face portion 162.

In another example, the interior cavity 700 may be partially or entirely filled with a polymer material such as an ethylene copolymer material to absorb shock, isolate vibration, and/or dampen noise when the golf club head 100 strikes a golf ball via the face portion 162. In particular, at least 50% of the interior cavity 700 may be filled with a high density ethylene copolymer ionomer, a fatty acid modified ethylene copolymer ionomer, a highly amorphous ethylene copolymer ionomer, an ionomer of ethylene acid acrylate terpolymer, an ethylene copolymer comprising a magnesium ionomer, an injection moldable ethylene copolymer that may be used in conventional injection molding equipment to create various shapes, an ethylene copolymer that can be used in conventional extrusion equipment to create various shapes, and/or an ethylene copolymer having high compression and low resilience similar to thermoset polybutadiene rubbers. For example, the ethylene copolymer may include any of the ethylene copolymers associated with DuPont™ High-Performance Resin (HPF) family of materials (e.g., DuPont™ HPF AD1172, DuPont™ HPF AD1035, DuPont® HPF 1000 and DuPont™ HPF 2000), which are manufactured by E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Company of Wilmington, Del. The DuPont™ HPF family of ethylene copolymers are injection moldable and may be used with conventional injection molding equipment and molds, provide low compression, and provide high resilience. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

Turning to FIG. 15, for example, the face portion 162 may include a first thickness 1510 ( $T_1$ ), and a second thickness 1520 ( $T_2$ ). The first thickness 1510 may be a thickness of a section of the face portion 162 adjacent to a groove 168 whereas the second thickness 1520 may be a thickness of a section of the face portion 162 below the groove 168. For example, the first thickness 1510 may be a maximum distance between the front surface 164 and the back surface 166. The second thickness 1520 may be based on the groove 168. In particular, the groove 168 may have a groove depth

1525 ( $D_{groove}$ ). The second thickness 1520 may be a maximum distance between the bottom of the groove 168 and the back surface 166. The sum of the second thickness 1520 and the groove depth 1525 may be substantially equal to the first thickness 1510 (e.g.,  $T_2 + D_{groove} = T_1$ ). Accordingly, the second thickness 1520 may be less than the first thickness 1510 (e.g.,  $T_2 < T_1$ ).

To lower and/or move the CG of the golf club head 100 further back, weight from the front portion 160 of the golf club head 100 may be removed by using a relatively thinner face portion 162. For example, the first thickness 1510 may be about 0.075 inch (1.905 millimeters) (e.g.,  $T_1 = 0.075$  inch). With the support of the back wall portion 1410 to form the interior cavity 700 and filling at least a portion of the interior cavity 700 with an elastic polymer material, the face portion 162 may be relatively thinner (e.g.,  $T_1 < 0.075$  inch) without degrading the structural integrity, sound, and/or feel of the golf club head 100. In one example, the first thickness 1510 may be less than or equal to 0.060 inch (1.524 millimeters) (e.g.,  $T_1 \leq 0.060$  inch). In another example, the first thickness 1510 may be less than or equal to 0.040 inch (1.016 millimeters) (e.g.,  $T_1 \leq 0.040$  inch). Based on the type of material(s) used to form the face portion 162 and/or the body portion 110, the face portion 162 may be even thinner with the first thickness 1510 being less than or equal to 0.030 inch (0.762 millimeters) (e.g.,  $T_1 \leq 0.030$  inch). The groove depth 1525 may be greater than or equal to the second thickness 1520 (e.g.,  $D_{groove} \geq T_2$ ). In one example, the groove depth 1525 may be about 0.020 inch (0.508 millimeters) (e.g.,  $D_{groove} = 0.020$  inch). Accordingly, the second thickness 1520 may be about 0.010 inch (0.254 millimeters) (e.g.,  $T_2 = 0.010$  inch). In another example, the groove depth 1525 may be about 0.015 inch (0.381 millimeters), and the second thickness 1520 may be about 0.015 inch (e.g.,  $D_{groove} = T_2 = 0.015$  inch). Alternatively, the groove depth 1525 may be less than the second thickness 1520 (e.g.,  $D_{groove} < T_2$ ). Without the support of the back wall portion 1410 and the elastic polymer material to fill in the interior cavity 700, a golf club head may not be able to withstand multiple impacts by a golf ball on a face portion. In contrast to the golf club head 100 as described herein, a golf club head with a relatively thin face portion but without the support of the back wall portion 1410 and the elastic polymer material to fill in the interior cavity 700 (e.g., a cavity-back golf club head) may produce unpleasant sound (e.g., a tinny sound) and/or feel during impact with a golf ball. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

Based on manufacturing processes and methods used to form the golf club head 100, the face portion 162 may include additional material at or proximate to a periphery of the face portion 162. Accordingly, the face portion 162 may also include a third thickness 1530, and a chamfer portion 1540. The third thickness 1530 may be greater than either the first thickness 1510 or the second thickness 1520 (e.g.,  $T_3 > T_1 > T_2$ ). In particular, the face portion 162 may be coupled to the body portion 110 by a welding process. For example, the first thickness 1510 may be about 0.030 inch (0.762 millimeters), the second thickness 1520 may be about 0.015 inch (0.381 millimeters), and the third thickness 1530 may be about 0.050 inch (1.27 millimeters). Accordingly, the chamfer portion 1540 may accommodate some of the additional material when the face portion 162 is welded to the body portion 110.

As illustrated in FIG. 16, for example, the face portion 162 may include a reinforcement section, generally shown as 1605, below one or more grooves 168. In one example,



the face portion 162 may include a reinforcement section 1605 below each groove. Alternatively, face portion 162 may include the reinforcement section 1605 below some grooves (e.g., every other groove) or below only one groove. The face portion 162 may include a first thickness 1610, a second thickness 1620, a third thickness 1630, and a chamfer portion 1640. The groove 168 may have a groove depth 1625. The reinforcement section 1605 may define the second thickness 1620. The first and second thicknesses 1610 and 1620, respectively, may be substantially equal to each other (e.g.,  $T_1=T_2$ ). In one example, the first and second thicknesses 1610 and 1620, respectively, may be about 0.030 inch (0.762 millimeters) (e.g.,  $T_1=T_2=0.030$  inch). The groove depth 1625 may be about 0.015 inch (0.381 millimeters), and the third thickness 1630 may be about 0.050 inch (1.27 millimeters). The groove 168 may also have a groove width. The width of the reinforcement section 1605 may be greater than or equal to the groove width. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

Alternatively, the face portion 162 may vary in thickness at and/or between the top portion 180 and the sole portion 190. In one example, the face portion 162 may be relatively thicker at or proximate to the top portion 180 than at or proximate to the sole portion 190 (e.g., thickness of the face portion 162 may taper from the top portion 180 towards the sole portion 190). In another example, the face portion 162 may be relatively thicker at or proximate to the sole portion 190 than at or proximate to the top portion 180 (e.g., thickness of the face portion 162 may taper from the sole portion 190 towards the top portion 180). In yet another example, the face portion 162 may be relatively thicker between the top portion 180 and the sole portion 190 than at or proximate to the top portion 180 and the sole portion 190 (e.g., thickness of the face portion 162 may have a bell-shaped contour). The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

Different from other golf club head designs, the interior cavity 700 of the body portion 110 and the location of the first and second sets of weight portions 120 and 130, respectively, along the perimeter of the golf club head 100 may result in a golf ball traveling away from the face portion 162 at a relatively higher ball launch angle and a relatively lower spin rate. As a result, the golf ball may travel farther (i.e., greater total distance, which includes carry and roll distances).

FIG. 17 depicts one manner in which the example golf club head described herein may be manufactured. In the example of FIG. 17, the process 1700 may begin with providing two or more weight portions, generally shown as the first and second sets of weight portions 120 and 130, respectively (block 1710). The first and second sets of weight portions 120 and 130, respectively, may be made of a first material such as a tungsten-based material. In one example, the weight portions of the first and second sets 120 and 130, respectively, may be tungsten-alloy screws.

The process 1700 may provide a body portion 110 having the face portion 162, the interior cavity 700, and the back portion 170 with two or more exterior weight ports, generally shown as 1420 and 1430 (block 1720). The body portion 110 may be made of a second material, which is different than the first material. The body portion 110 may be manufactured using an investment casting process, a billet forging process, a stamping process, a computer numerically controlled (CNC) machining process, a die casting process, any combination thereof, or other suitable manufacturing processes. In one example, the body portion 110 may be made

of 17-4 PH stainless steel using a casting process. In another example, the body portion 110 may be made of other suitable type of stainless steel (e.g., Nitronic® 50 stainless steel manufactured by AK Steel Corporation, West Chester, Ohio) using a forging process. By using Nitronic® 50 stainless steel to manufacture the body portion 110, the golf club head 100 may be relatively stronger and/or more resistant to corrosion than golf club heads made from other types of steel. Each weight port of the body portion 110 may include an opening and a port wall. For example, the weight port 1421 may include the opening 720 and the port wall 725 with the opening 720 and the port wall 725 being on opposite ends of each other. The interior cavity 700 may separate the port wall 725 of the weight port 1421 and the back surface 166 of the face portion 162. In a similar manner, the weight port 1835 may include the opening 730 and the port wall 735 with the opening 730 and the port wall 735 being on opposite ends of each other. The interior cavity 700 may separate the port wall 735 of the weight port 1435 and the back surface 166 of the face portion 162.

The process 1700 may couple each of the first and second sets of weight portions 120 and 130 into one of the two or more exterior weight ports (blocks 1730). In one example, the process 1700 may insert and secure the weight portion 121 in the exterior weight port 1421, and the weight portion 135 in the exterior weight portion 1435. The process 1700 may use various manufacturing methods and/or processes to secure the first and second sets of weight portions 120 and 130, respectively, in the exterior weight ports such as the weight ports 1421 and 1435 (e.g., epoxy, welding, brazing, mechanical lock(s), any combination thereof, etc.).

The process 1700 may partially or entirely fill the interior cavity 700 with an elastic polymer material (e.g., Sorbothane® material) or a polymer material (e.g., an ethylene copolymer material such as DuPont™ HPF family of materials) (block 1740). In one example, at least 50% of the interior cavity 700 may be filled with the elastic polymer material. As mentioned above, the elastic polymer material may absorb shock, isolate vibration, and/or dampen noise in response to the golf club head 100 striking a golf ball. In addition or alternatively, the interior cavity 700 may be filled with a thermoplastic elastomer material and/or a thermoplastic polyurethane material. As illustrated in FIG. 18, for example, the golf club head 100 may include one or more weight ports (e.g., one shown as 1431 in FIG. 14) with a first opening 1830 and a second opening 1835. The second opening 1835 may be used to access the interior cavity 700. In one example, the process 1700 (FIG. 17) may fill the interior cavity 700 with an elastic polymer material by injecting the elastic polymer material into the interior cavity 700 from the first opening 1830 via the second opening 1835. The first and second openings 1830 and 1835, respectively, may be same or different in size and/or shape. While the above example may describe and depict a particular weight port with a second opening, any other weight ports of the golf club head 100 may include a second opening (e.g., the weight port 720). The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

Referring back to FIG. 17, the example process 1700 is merely provided and described in conjunction with other figures as an example of one way to manufacture the golf club head 100. While a particular order of actions is illustrated in FIG. 17, these actions may be performed in other temporal sequences. For example, two or more actions depicted in FIG. 17 may be performed sequentially, concurrently, or simultaneously. In one example, blocks 1710,



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1720, 1730, and/or 1740 may be performed simultaneously or concurrently. Although FIG. 17 depicts a particular number of blocks, the process may not perform one or more blocks. In one example, the interior cavity 700 may not be filled (i.e., block 1740 may not be performed). The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

Referring back to FIGS. 1-14, the face portion 162 may include a non-smooth back surface to improve adhesion and/or mitigate delamination between the face portion 162 and the elastic polymer material used to fill the interior cavity 700 (e.g., FIG. 7). Various methods and/or processes such as an abrasive blasting process (e.g., a bead blasting process, a sand blasting process, other suitable blasting process, or any combination thereof) and/or a milling (machining) process may be used to form the back surface 166 into a non-smooth surface. For example, the back surface 166 may have with a surface roughness (Ra) ranging from 0.5 to 250  $\mu\text{in}$  (0.012 to 6.3  $\mu\text{m}$ ). The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture are not limited in this regard.

As illustrated in FIGS. 19-21, for example, a face portion 1900 may include the front surface 1910, and the back surface 2010. The front surface 1910 may include one or more grooves, generally shown as 1920, extending longitudinally across the front surface 1910 (e.g., extending between the toe portion 140 and the heel portion 150 of FIG. 1). The front surface 1910 may be used to impact a golf ball (not shown).

The back surface 2010 may also include one or more channels, generally shown as 2020. The channels 2020 may extend longitudinally across the back surface 2010. The channels 2020 may be parallel or substantially parallel to each other. The channels 2020 may engage with the elastic polymer material used to fill the interior cavity 700, and serve as a mechanical locking mechanism between the face portion 1900 and the elastic polymer material. In particular, a channel 2100 may include an opening 2110, a bottom section 2120, and two sidewalls, generally shown as 2130 and 2132. The bottom section 2120 may be parallel or substantially parallel to the back surface 2010. The two sidewalls 2130 and 2132 may be converging sidewalls (i.e., the two sidewalls 2130 and 2132 may not be parallel to each other). The bottom section 2120 and the sidewalls 2130 and 2132 may form two undercut portions, generally shown as 2140 and 2142. That is, a width 2115 at the opening 2110 may be less than a width 2125 of the bottom section 2120. A cross section of the channel 2100 may be symmetrical about an axis 2150. While FIG. 21 may depict flat or substantially flat sidewalls, the two sidewalls 2130 and 2132 may be curved (e.g., convex relative to each other).

Instead of flat or substantially flat sidewalls as shown in FIG. 21, a channel may include other types of sidewalls. As illustrated in FIG. 22, for example, a channel 2200 may include an opening 2210, a bottom section 2220, and two sidewalls, generally shown as 2230 and 2232. The bottom section 2220 may be parallel or substantially parallel to the back surface 2010. The two sidewalls 2230 and 2232 may be stepped sidewalls. The bottom section 2220 and the sidewalls 2230 and 2232 may form two undercut portions, generally shown as 2240 and 2242. That is, a width 2215 at the opening 2210 may be less than a width 2225 of the bottom section 2220. A cross section of the channel 2200 may be symmetrical about an axis 2250.

Instead of being symmetrical as shown in FIGS. 21 and 22, a channel may be asymmetrical. As illustrated in FIG. 23, for another example, a channel 2300 may include an opening 2310, a bottom section 2320, and two sidewalls,

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generally shown as 2330 and 2332. The bottom section 2320 may be parallel or substantially parallel to the back surface 2010. The bottom section 2320 and the sidewall 2330 may form an undercut portion 2340.

Referring to FIG. 24, for example, a channel 2400 may include an opening 2410, a bottom section 2420, and two sidewalls, generally shown as 2430 and 2432. The bottom section 2420 may not be parallel or substantially parallel to the back surface 2010. The two sidewalls 2430 and 2432 may be parallel or substantially parallel to each other but one sidewall may be longer than the other sidewall. The bottom section 2420 and the sidewall 2432 may form an undercut portion 2440.

In the example as shown in FIG. 25, a face portion 2500 may include a back surface 2510 with one or more channels, generally shown as 2520, extending laterally across the back surface 2510 (e.g., extending between the top portion 180 and the sole portion 190 of FIG. 1). In another example as depicted in FIG. 26, a face portion 2600 may include a back surface 2610 with one or more channels, generally shown as 2620, extending diagonally across the back surface 2610. Alternatively, a face portion may include a combination of channels extending in different directions across a back surface of the face portion (e.g., extending longitudinally, laterally, and/or diagonally). Turning to FIG. 27, for yet another example, a face portion 2700 may include a back surface 2710 with one or more channels, generally shown as 2720, 2730, and 2740, extending in different directions across the back surface 2710. In particular, the face portion 2700 may include a plurality of channels 2720 extending longitudinally across the back surface 2710, a plurality of channels 2730 extending laterally across the back surface 2710, and a plurality of channels 2740 extending diagonally across the back surface 2710.

In addition or alternatively, the golf club head 100 may include a bonding agent to improve adhesion and/or mitigate delamination between the face portion 162 and the elastic polymer material used to fill the interior cavity 700 of the golf club head 100 (e.g., FIG. 7). Referring to FIG. 28, for example, the golf club head 100 may include the face portion 162, a bonding portion 2810, and an elastic polymer material 2820. In one example, the bonding portion 2810 may be low-viscosity, organic, solvent-based solutions and/or dispersions of polymers and other reactive chemicals such as MEGUM™, ROBOND™, and/or THIXON™ materials manufactured by the Dow Chemical Company, Auburn Hills, Mich. In another example, the bonding portion 2810 may be LOCTITE® materials manufactured by Henkel Corporation, Rocky Hill, Conn. The bonding portion 2810 may be applied to the back surface 166 to bond the elastic polymer material 2820 to the face portion 162 (e.g., extending between the back surface 166 and the elastic polymer material 2820). For example, the bonding portion 2810 may be applied when the interior cavity 700 is filled with the elastic polymer material 2820 via an injection-molding process. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture are not limited in this regard.

FIG. 29 depicts one manner in which the interior cavity 700 of the golf club head 100 or any of the golf club heads described herein is partially or entirely filled with an elastic polymer material or an elastomer material. The process 2900 may begin with heating the golf club head 100 to a certain temperature (block 2910). In one example, the golf club head 100 may be heated to a temperature ranging between 150° C. to 250° C., which may depend on factors such as the vaporization temperature of the elastic polymer material to be injected in the interior cavity 700. The elastic polymer



material may then be heated to a certain temperature (block 2920). The elastic polymer material may be a non-foaming and injection-moldable thermoplastic elastomer (TPE) material. Accordingly, the elastic polymer material may be heated to reach a liquid or a flowing state prior to being injected into the interior cavity 700. The temperature to which the elastic polymer material may be heated may depend on the type of elastic polymer material used to partially or fully fill the interior cavity 700. The heated elastic polymer material may be injected into the interior cavity 700 to partially or fully fill the interior cavity 700 (block 2930). The elastic polymer material may be injected into the interior cavity 700 from one or more of the weight ports described herein (e.g., one or more weight ports of the first and second sets of weight ports 1420 and 1430, respectively, shown in FIG. 14). One or more other weight ports may allow the air inside the interior cavity 700 displaced by the elastic polymer material to vent from the interior cavity 700. In one example, the golf club head 100 may be oriented horizontally as shown in FIG. 14 during the injection molding process. The elastic polymer material may be injected into the interior cavity 700 from weight ports 1431 and 1432. The weight ports 1421, 1422 and/or 1423 may serve as air ports for venting the displaced air from the interior cavity 700. Thus, regardless of the orientation of the golf club head 100 during the injection molding process, the elastic polymer material may be injected into the interior cavity 700 from one or more lower positioned weight ports while one or more upper positioned weight ports may serve as air vents. The mold (i.e., the golf club head 100) may then be cooled passively (e.g., at room temperature) or actively so that the elastic polymer material reaches a solid state and adheres to the back surface 166 of the face portion 162. The elastic polymer material may directly adhere to the back surface 166 of the face portion 162. Alternatively, the elastic polymer material may adhere to the back surface 166 of the face portion 162 with the aid of the one or more structures on the back surface 166 and/or a bonding agent described herein (e.g., the bonding portion 2810 shown in FIG. 28). The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

As discussed above, the elastic polymer material may be heated to a liquid state (i.e., non-foaming) and solidifies after being injection molded in the interior cavity 700. An elastic polymer material with a low modulus of elasticity may provide vibration and noise dampening for the face portion 162 when the face portion 162 impacts a golf ball. For example, an elastic polymer material that foams when heated may provide vibration and noise dampening. However, such a foaming elastic polymer material may not have sufficient rigidity to provide structural support to a relatively thin face portion because of possible excessive deflection and/or compression of the elastic polymer material when absorbing the impact of a golf ball. In one example, the elastic polymer material that is injection molded in the interior cavity 700 may have a relatively high modulus of elasticity to provide structural support to the face portion 162 and yet elastically deflect to absorb the impact forces experienced by the face portion 162 when striking a golf ball. Thus, a non-foaming and injection moldable elastic polymer material with a relatively high modulus of elasticity may be used for partially or fully filling the interior cavity 700 to provide structural support and reinforcement for the face portion 162 in addition to providing vibration and noise dampening. That is, the non-foaming and injection moldable elastic polymer material may be a structural support portion

for the face portion 162. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture are not limited in this regard.

FIG. 30 depicts one manner in which a bonding agent as described herein may be applied to a golf club head prior to partially or fully injecting an elastic polymer in the interior cavity 700. In the example of FIG. 30, the process 3000 may begin with injecting a bonding agent on the back surface 166 of the face portion 162 (block 3010). The bonding agent may be injected on the back surface 166 prior to or after heating the golf club head as described above depending on the properties of the bonding agent. The bonding agent may be injected through one or more of the first set of weight ports 1420 and/or the second set of weight ports 1430. The bonding agent may be injected on the back surface 166 through several or all of the first set of weight ports 1420 and the second set of weight ports 1430. For example, an injection instrument such as a nozzle or a needle may be inserted into each weight port until the tip or outlet of the instrument is near the back surface 166. The bonding agent may then be injected on the back surface 166 from the outlet of the instrument. Additionally, the instrument may be moved, rotated and/or swiveled while inside the interior cavity 700 so that the bonding agent is injected onto an area of the back surface 166 surrounding the instrument. For example, the outlet of the injection instrument may be moved in a circular pattern while inside a weight port to inject the bonding agent in a corresponding circular pattern on the back surface 166. Each of the first set of weight ports 1420 and the second set of weight ports 1430 may be utilized to inject a bonding agent on the back surface 166. However, utilizing all of first weight ports 1420 and/or the second set of weight ports 1430 may not be necessary. For example, using every other adjacent weight port may be sufficient to inject a bonding agent on the entire back surface 166. In another example, weight ports 1421, 1422, 1431, 1433 and 1436 may be used to inject the bonding agent on the back surface 166. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture are not limited in this regard.

The process 3000 may also include spreading the bonding agent on the back surface 166 (block 3020) after injection of the bonding agent onto the back surface 166 so that a generally uniform coating of the bonding agent is provided on the back surface 166. According to one example, the bonding agent may be spread on the back surface 166 by injecting air into the interior cavity 700 through one or more of the first set of weight ports 1420 and the second set of weight ports 1430. The air may be injected into the interior cavity 700 and on the back surface 166 by inserting an air nozzle into one or more of the first set of weight ports 1420 and the second set of weight ports 1430. According to one example, the air nozzle may be moved, rotated and/or swiveled at a certain distance from the back surface 166 so as to uniformly blow air onto the bonding agent to spread the bonding agent on the back surface 166 for a uniform coating or a substantially uniform coating of the bonding agent on the back surface 166. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture are not limited in this regard.

The process 3000 may include a single step of injecting and uniformly or substantially uniformly coating the back surface 166 with the bonding agent. In one example, the bonding agent may be injected on the back surface 166 by being converted into fine particles or droplets (i.e., atomized) and sprayed on the back surface 166. Accordingly, the back surface 166 may be uniformly or substantially uniformly coated with the bonding agent in one step. A substantially uniform coating of the back surface 166 with the bonding agent may be defined as a coating having slight



non-uniformities due to the injection process or the manufacturing process. However, such slight non-uniformities may not affect the bonding of the filler material to the back surface **166** with the bonding agent as described herein. For example, spraying the bonding agent on the back surface **166** may result in overlapping regions of the bonding agent having a slightly greater coating thickness than other regions of the bonding agent on the back surface **166**. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture are not limited in this regard.

As described herein, any two or more of the weight portions may be configured as a single weight portion. In the example of FIGS. **31** and **32**, a golf club head **3100** may include a body portion **3110** and two or more weight portions, generally shown as a first set of weight portions **3120** (e.g., shown as weight portions **3121**, **3122**, **3123**, and **3124**) and a second weight portion **3130**. The body portion **3110** may include a toe portion **3140**, a heel portion **3150**, a front portion (not shown), a back portion **3170**, a top portion **3180**, and a sole portion **3190**. The front portion may be similar in many respects to the front portion **160** of the golf club head **100**. Accordingly, details of the front portion of the golf club head **3100** are not provided.

The body portion **3110** may be made of a first material whereas the first set of weight portions **3120** and the second weight portion **3130** may be made of a second material. The first and second materials may be similar or different materials. For example, the body portion **3110** may be partially or entirely made of a steel-based material (e.g., 17-4 PH stainless steel, Nitronic® 50 stainless steel, maraging steel or other types of stainless steel), a titanium-based material, an aluminum-based material (e.g., a high-strength aluminum alloy or a composite aluminum alloy coated with a high-strength alloy), any combination thereof, and/or other suitable types of materials. The first set of weight portions **3120** and the second weight portion **3130** may be partially or entirely made of a high-density material such as a tungsten-based material or other suitable types of materials. Alternatively, the body portion **3110** and/or the first set of weight portions **3120** and the second weight portion **3130** may be partially or entirely made of a non-metal material (e.g., composite, plastic, etc.). The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture are not limited in this regard.

The golf club head **3100** may be an iron-type golf club head (e.g., a 1-iron, a 2-iron, a 3-iron, a 4-iron, a 5-iron, a 6-iron, a 7-iron, an 8-iron, a 9-iron, etc.) or a wedge-type golf club head (e.g., a pitching wedge, a lob wedge, a sand wedge, an n-degree wedge such as 44 degrees (°), 48°, 52°, 56°, 60°, etc.). Although FIGS. **31** and **32** may depict a particular type of club head, the apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein may be applicable to other types of club heads (e.g., a driver-type club head, a fairway wood-type club head, a hybrid-type club head, a putter-type club head, etc.). The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

The toe portion **3140** and the heel portion **3150** may be on opposite ends of the body portion **3110**. The heel portion **3150** may include a hosel portion **3155** configured to receive a shaft (not shown) with a grip (not shown) on one end and the golf club head **3100** on the opposite end of the shaft to form a golf club.

The back portion **3170** may include a back wall portion **3210** with one or more exterior weight ports along a periphery of the back portion **3170**, generally shown as a first set of exterior weight ports **3220** (e.g., shown as weight ports **3221**, **3222**, **3223**, and **3224**) and a second weight port **3230**.

Each exterior weight port of the first set of weight ports **3220** may be associated with a port diameter. In one example, the port diameter may be about 0.25 inch (6.35 millimeters). Any two adjacent exterior weight ports of the first set of exterior weight ports **3220** may be separated by less than the port diameter. The first set of weight ports **3220** and the second weight port **3230** may be exterior weight ports configured to receive one or more weight portions.

Each weight portion of the first set of weight portions **3120** (e.g., shown as weight portions **3121**, **3122**, **3123**, and **3124**) may be disposed in a weight port of the first set of weight ports **3220** (e.g., shown as weight ports **3221**, **3222**, **3223**, and **3224**) located at or proximate to the toe portion **3140** and/or the top portion **3180** on the back portion **3170**. For example, the weight portion **3121** may be partially or entirely disposed in the weight port **3221**. In another example, the weight portion **3122** may be disposed in a weight port **3222** located in a transition region between the top portion **3180** and the toe portion **3140** (e.g., a top-and-toe transition region). The configuration of the first set of weight ports **3220** and the first set of weight portions **3120** is similar to many respects to the golf club head **100**. Accordingly, a detailed description of the configuration of the first set of weight ports **3220** and the first set of weight portions **3120** is not provided.

The second weight port **3230** may be a recess extending from the toe portion **3140** or a location proximate to the toe portion **3140** to the sole portion or a location proximate to the sole portion **3190** and through the transition region between the toe portion **3140** and the sole portion **3190**. Accordingly, as shown in FIG. **31**, the second weight port **3230** may resemble an L-shaped recess. The second weight portion **3130** may resemble the shape of the second weight port **3230** and may be configured to be disposed in the second weight port **3230**. The second weight portion **3130** may be partially or fully disposed in the weight port **3230**. The second weight portion **3130** may have any shape such as oval, rectangular, triangular, or any geometric or non-geometric shape. The second weight port **3230** may be shaped similar to the second weight portion **3130**. However, portions of the second weight portion **3130** that are inserted in the second weight port **3230** may have similar shapes as the weight port **3230**. As described in detail herein, any of the weight portions described herein, including the weight portions **3120** and the second weight portion **3130** may be coupled to the back portion **3170** of the body portion **3110** with various manufacturing methods and/or processes (e.g., a bonding process, a welding process, a brazing process, a mechanical locking method, any combination thereof, or other suitable manufacturing methods and/or processes).

The second weight portion **3130** may be configured to place the center of gravity of the golf club head **100** at an optimal location and optimize the moment of inertia of the golf club head about a vertical axis that extends through the center of gravity of the golf club head **3100**. All or a substantial portion of the second weight portion **3130** may be generally near the sole portion **3190**. For example, the second weight portion **3130** may be near the periphery of the body portion **3110** and extend from the sole portion **3190** to the toe portion **3190**. As shown in the example of FIG. **32**, the second weight portion **3130** may be located near the periphery of the body portion **3110** and partially or substantially extend along the sole portion **3190** to lower the center of gravity of the golf club head **3100**. A portion of the second weight portion **3130** may be located near the periphery of the body portion **3110** and extend from the sole portion **3190** to the toe portion **3140** through a transition region **3147**



between the sole portion **3190** and the toe portion **3140** to lower the center of gravity and increase the moment of inertia of the golf club head **3100** about a vertical axis that extends through the center of gravity. To lower the center of gravity of the golf club head **3100**, all or a portion of the second weight portion **3130** may be located closer to the sole portion **3190** than to a horizontal midplane **3260** of the golf club head **3100**. The location of the second weight portion **3130** (i.e., the location of the weight port **3230**) and the physical properties and materials of construction of the weight portions of the second weight port **3130** may be determined to optimally affect the weight, weight distribution, center of gravity, moment of inertia characteristics, structural integrity and/or other static and/or dynamic characteristics of the golf club head **3100**. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

The weight portions of the first set of weight portions **3120** may have similar or different physical properties (e.g., color, shape, size, density, mass, volume, etc.). In the illustrated example as shown in FIG. **32**, each of the weight portions of the first set of weight portions **3120** may have a cylindrical shape (e.g., a circular cross section). Alternatively, each of the weight portions of the first set of weight portions **3120** may have different shapes. Although the above examples may describe weight portions having a particular shape, the apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein may include weight portions of other suitable shapes (e.g., a portion of or a whole sphere, cube, cone, cylinder, pyramid, cuboidal, prism, frustum, or other suitable geometric shape). The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

In the example of FIGS. **33-42**, a golf club head **3300** may include a body portion **3310**, and two or more weight portions, generally shown as a first set of weight portions **3320** (e.g., shown as weight portions **3321** and **3322**) and a second set of weight portions **3330** (e.g., shown as weight portions **3331**, **3332**, **3333**, **3334** and **3335**). The body portion **3310** may include a toe portion **3340**, a heel portion **3350**, a front portion **3360**, a back portion **3370**, a top portion **3380**, and a sole portion **3390**. The heel portion **3350** may include a hosel portion **3355** configured to receive a shaft (not shown) with a grip (not shown) on one end and the golf club head **3300** on the opposite end of the shaft to form a golf club.

The body portion **3310** may be made of a first material whereas the first and second sets of weight portions **3320** and **3330**, respectively, may be made of a second material. The first and second materials may be similar or different materials. The materials from which the golf club head **3300**, weight portions **3320** and/or weight portions **3330** are constructed may be similar in many respects to any of the golf club heads and the weight portions described herein such as the golf club head **100**. Accordingly, a detailed description of the materials of construction of the golf club head **3300**, weight portions **3320** and/or weight **3330** are not described in detail. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture are not limited in this regard.

The golf club head **3300** may be an iron-type golf club head (e.g., a 1-iron, a 2-iron, a 3-iron, a 4-iron, a 5-iron, a 6-iron, a 7-iron, an 8-iron, a 9-iron, etc.) or a wedge-type golf club head (e.g., a pitching wedge, a lob wedge, a sand wedge, an n-degree wedge such as 44 degrees ( $^{\circ}$ ), 48 $^{\circ}$ , 52 $^{\circ}$ , 56 $^{\circ}$ , 60 $^{\circ}$ , etc.). Although FIGS. **33-42** may depict a particular type of club head, the apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein may be applicable to other

types of club heads (e.g., a driver-type club head, a fairway wood-type club head, a hybrid-type club head, a putter-type club head, etc.). The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

The front portion **3360** may include a face portion **3362** (e.g., a strike face). The face portion **3362** may include a front surface **3364** and a back surface **3366** (shown in FIG. **37**). The front surface **3364** may include one or more grooves **3368** extending between the toe portion **3340** and the heel portion **3350**. While the figures may depict a particular number of grooves, the apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein may include more or less grooves. The face portion **3362** may be used to impact a golf ball (not shown). The face portion **3362** may be an integral portion of the body portion **3310**. Alternatively, the face portion **3362** may be a separate piece or an insert coupled to the body portion **3310** via various manufacturing methods and/or processes (e.g., a bonding process such as adhesive, a welding process such as laser welding, a brazing process, a soldering process, a fusing process, a mechanical locking or connecting method, any combination thereof, or other suitable types of manufacturing methods and/or processes). The face portion **3362** may be associated with a loft plane that defines the loft angle of the golf club head **3300**. The loft angle may vary based on the type of golf club (e.g., a long iron, a middle iron, a short iron, a wedge, etc.). In one example, the loft angle may be between five degrees and seventy-five degrees. In another example, the loft angle may be between twenty degrees and sixty degrees. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

As illustrated in FIG. **36**, the back portion **3370** may include a back wall portion **3510** with one or more exterior weight ports along a periphery of the back portion **3370**, generally shown as a first set of exterior weight ports **3520** (e.g., shown as weight ports **3521** and **3522**) and a second set of exterior weight ports **3530** (e.g., shown as weight ports **3531**, **3532**, **3533**, **3534** and **3535**). Each exterior weight port may be defined by an opening in the back wall portion **3510**. Each exterior weight port may be associated with a port diameter. In one example, the port diameter may be about 0.25 inch (6.35 millimeters). The weight ports of the first set of exterior weight ports **3520** may be separated by less than the port diameter or the port diameter of any of the two adjacent weight ports of the first set of exterior weight ports **3520**. In a similar manner, any two adjacent exterior weight ports of the second set of exterior weight ports **3530** may be separated by less than the port diameter or the port diameter of any of the two adjacent weight ports of the second set of exterior weight ports **3530**. The first and second exterior weight ports **3520** and **3530**, respectively, may be exterior weight ports configured to receive one or more weight portions. In particular, each weight portion of the first set of weight portions **3320** (e.g., shown as weight portions **3321** and **3322**) may be disposed in a weight port located at or proximate to the toe portion **3340** and/or the top portion **3380** on the back portion **3370**. For example, the weight portion **3321** may be partially or entirely disposed in the weight port **3521**. In another example, the weight portion **3322** may be disposed in the weight port **3522** located in a transition region between the top portion **3380** and the toe portion **3340** (e.g., a top-and-toe transition region). Each weight portion of the second set of weight portions **3330** (e.g., shown as weight portions **3331**, **3332**, **3333**, **3334** and **3335**) may be disposed in a weight port located at or proximate to the toe portion **3340** and/or the sole portion **3390** on the back portion **3370**. For example, the weight



portion 3333 may be partially or entirely disposed in the weight port 3533. In another example, the weight portion 3335 may be disposed in a weight port 3535 located in a transition region between the sole portion 3390 and the toe portion 3340 (e.g., a sole-and-toe transition region). In another example, any of the weight portions of the first set of weight portions 3320 and the second set of weight portions 3330 may be disposed in any of the weight ports of the first set of weight ports 3520 and the second set of weight ports 3530. As described in detail herein, the first and second sets of weight portions 3320 and 3330, respectively, may be coupled to the back portion 3370 of the body portion 3310 with various manufacturing methods and/or processes (e.g., a bonding process, a welding process, a brazing process, a mechanical locking method, any combination thereof, or other suitable manufacturing methods and/or processes).

Alternatively, the golf club head 3300 may not include (i) the first set of weight portions 3320, (ii) the second set of weight portions 3330, or (iii) both the first and second sets of weight portions 3320 and 3330. In particular, the back portion 3370 of the body portion 3310 may not include weight ports at or proximate to the top portion 3370 and/or the sole portion 3390. For example, the mass of the first set of weight portions 3320 (e.g., 3 grams) and/or the mass of the second set of weight portions 3330 (e.g., 16.8 grams) may be integral part(s) the body portion 3310 instead of separate weight portion(s). The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

The first and second sets of weight portions 3320 and 3330, respectively, may have similar or different physical properties (e.g., color, shape, size, density, mass, volume, etc.). As a result, the first and second sets of weight portions 3320 and 3330, respectively, may contribute to the ornamental design of the golf club head 3300. The physical properties of the first and second sets of weight portions 3320 and 3330 may be similar in many respects to any of the weight portions described herein, such as the weight portions shown in the example of FIG. 11. Furthermore, the devices and/or methods by which the first and second sets of weight portions 3320 and 3330 are coupled to the golf club head 3300 may be similar in many respects to any of the weight portions described herein, such as the weight portions shown in the example of FIGS. 12 and 13. Accordingly, a detailed description of the physical properties of the first and second sets of weight portions 3320 and 3330, and the devices and/or methods by which the first and second sets of weight portions 3320 and 3330 are coupled to the golf club head 3300 are not described in detail herein. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

As illustrated in FIG. 34, golf club head 3300 may be associated with a ground plane 4110, a horizontal midplane 4120, and a top plane 4130. In particular, the ground plane 4110 may be a plane that may be substantially parallel with the ground and be tangential to the sole portion 3390 of the golf club head 3300 when the golf club head 3300 is at an address position (e.g., the golf club head 3300 is aligned to strike a golf ball). A top plane 4130 may be a tangential plane to the top portion of the 3380 of the golf club head 3300 when the golf club head 3300 is at the address position. The ground and top planes 4110 and 4130, respectively, may be substantially parallel to each other. The horizontal midplane 4120 may be located at half the vertical distance between the ground and top planes 4110 and 4130, respectively.

To provide optimal perimeter weighting for the golf club head 3300, the first set of weight portions 3320 (e.g., weight portions 3321 and 3322) may be configured to counter-balance the weight of the hosel 3355 and/or increase the moment of inertia of the golf club head 3300 about a vertical axis of the golf club head 3300 that extends through the center of gravity of the golf club head 3300. For example, as shown in FIG. 34, the first set of weight portions 3320 (e.g., weight portions 3321 and 3322) may be located near the periphery of the body portion 3310 and extend in a transition region 3345 between the top portion 3380 and the toe portion 3340. In another example, the first set of weight portions 3320 (e.g., weight portions 3321 and 3322) may be located near the periphery of the body portion 3310 and extend proximate to the toe portion 3340. The locations of the first set of weight portions 3320 (i.e., the locations of the first set of weight ports 3520) and the physical properties and materials of construction of the weight portions of the first set of weight portions 3320 may be determined to optimally affect the weight, weight distribution, center of gravity, moment of inertia characteristics, structural integrity and/or other static and/or dynamic characteristics of the golf club head 3300. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

The second set of weight portions 3330 (e.g., weight portions 3331, 3332, 3333, 3334 and 3335) may be configured to place the center of gravity of the golf club head 3300 at an optimal location and/or optimize the moment of inertia of the golf club head about a vertical axis that extends through the center of gravity of the golf club head 3300. Referring to FIG. 34, all or a substantial portion of the second set of weight portions 3330 may be near the sole portion 3390. For example, the second set of weight portions 3330 (e.g., weight portions 3331, 3332, 3333, 3334 and 3335) may extend at or near the sole portion 3390 between the toe portion 3340 and the heel portion 3350 to lower the center of gravity of the golf club head 3300. The weight portions 3334 and 3335 may be located closer to the toe portion 3340 than to the heel portion 3350 and/or at or near a transition region 3347 between the sole portion 3390 and the toe portion 3340 to increase the moment of inertia of the golf club head 3300 about a vertical axis that extends through the center of gravity. Some of the weight portions of the second set of weight portions 3330 may be located at the toe portion. To lower the center of gravity of the golf club head 3300, all or a portion of the second set of weight portions 3330 may be located closer to the sole portion 3390 than to the horizontal midplane 4120. The locations of the second set of weight portions 3330 (i.e., the locations of the second set of weight ports 3530) and the physical properties and materials of construction of the weight portions of the second set of weight portions 3330 may be determined to optimally affect the weight, weight distribution, center of gravity, moment of inertia characteristics, structural integrity and/or other static and/or dynamic characteristics of the golf club head 3300. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

Turning to FIG. 37, for example, the first and second sets of weight portions 3320 and 3330, respectively, may be located away from the back surface 3366 of the face portion 3362 (e.g., not directly coupled to each other). That is, the first and second sets of weight portions 3320 and 3330, respectively, and the back surface 3366 may be partially or entirely separated by an interior cavity 3800 of the body portion 3310. For example, each exterior weight port of the first and second sets of exterior weight ports 3320 and 3330



may include an opening (e.g., generally shown as **3820** and **3830**) and a port wall (e.g., generally shown as **3825** and **3835**). The port walls **3825** and **3835** may be integral portions of the back wall portion **3510** (e.g., a section of the back wall portion **3510**). Each of the openings **3820** and **3830** may be configured to receive a weight portion such as weight portions **3321** and **3335**, respectively. The opening **3820** may be located at one end of the weight port **3521**, and the port wall **3825** may be located or proximate to at an opposite end of the weight port **3521**. In a similar manner, the opening **3830** may be located at one end of the weight port **3535**, and the port wall **3835** may be located at or proximate to an opposite end of the weight port **3535**. The port walls **3825** and **3835** may be separated from the face portion **3362** (e.g., separated by the interior cavity **3800**). Each port wall of the first set of weight ports **3520**, such as the port wall **3825** may have a distance **3826** from the back surface **3366** of the face portion **3362** as shown in FIG. **37**. Each port wall of the second set of weight ports **3530**, such as the port wall **3835** may have a distance **3836** from the back surface **3366** of the face portion **3362**. The distances **3826** and **3836** may be determined to optimize the location of the center of gravity of the golf club head **3300** when the first and second sets of weight ports **3520** and **3530**, respectively, receive weight portions as described herein. According to one example, the distance **3836** may be greater than the distance **3826** so that the center of gravity of the golf club head **3300** is moved toward the back portion **3370** and/or lowered toward the sole portion **3390**. According to one example, the distance **3836** may be greater than the distance **3826** by a factor ranging from about 1.5 to about 4. In other words, the distance **3836** may be about 1.5 times to about 4 times greater than the distance **3826**. As a result, a width **3840** (shown in FIG. **38**) of a portion of the interior cavity **3800** below the horizontal midplane **4120** may be greater than a width **3842** of the interior cavity **3800** above the horizontal midplane **4120**. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

As discussed herein, the center of gravity (CG) of the golf club head **3300** may be relatively farther back from the face portion **3362** and relatively lower towards a ground plane (e.g., one shown as **4110** in FIG. **34**) as compared to a golf club without a width **3840** of a portion of the interior cavity **3800** being greater than a width **3842** of the interior cavity **3800** as described herein, with all or a substantial portion of the second set of weight portions **3330** being closer to the sole portion **3390** than to the horizontal midplane **4120**, and the first and second sets of weight portions **3320** and **3330**, respectively, being away from the back surface **3366** than if the second set of weight portions **3330** were directly coupled to the back surface **3366**. The locations of the first and second sets of weight ports **3520** and **3530** and the physical properties and materials of construction of the weight portions of the first and second sets of weight portions **3320** and **3330**, respectively, may be determined to optimally affect the weight, weight distribution, center of gravity, moment of inertia characteristics, structural integrity and/or other static and/or dynamic characteristics of the golf club head **3300**. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

While the figures may depict weight ports with a particular cross-section shape, the apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein may include weight ports with other suitable cross-section shapes. The weight ports of the first and/or second sets of weight ports **3520** and **3530** may have cross-sectional shapes that are similar to the

cross-sectional shapes of any of the weight ports described herein. Accordingly, the detailed description of the cross-sectional shapes of the weight ports **3520** and **3530** are not described in detail. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

The first and second sets of weight portions **3320** and **3330**, respectively, may be similar in mass (e.g., all of the weight portions of the first and second sets **3320** and **3330**, respectively, weigh about the same). Alternatively, the first and second sets of weight portions **3320** and **3330**, respectively, may be different in mass individually or as an entire set. In particular, each of the weight portions of the first set **3320** (e.g., shown as **3321** and **3322**) may have relatively less mass than any of the weight portions of the second set **3330** (e.g., shown as **3331**, **3332**, **3333**, **3334** and **3335**). For example, the second set of weight portions **3330** may account for more than 50% of the total mass from exterior weight portions of the golf club head **3300**. As a result, the golf club head **3300** may be configured to have at least 50% of the total mass from exterior weight portions disposed below the horizontal midplane **4120**. In one example, the total mass from exterior weight portions may be greater below the horizontal midplane **4120** than the total mass from exterior weight portions above the horizontal midplane **4120**. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

In one example, the golf club head **3300** may have a mass in the range of about 220 grams to about 330 grams based on the type of golf club (e.g., a 4-iron versus a lob wedge). The body portion **3310** may have a mass in the range of about 200 grams to about 310 grams with the first and second sets of weight portions **3320** and **3330**, respectively, having a mass of about 20 grams (e.g., a total mass from exterior weight portions). Each of the weight portions of the first set **3320** may have a mass of about one gram (1.0 g) whereas each of the weight portions of the second set **3330** may have a mass of about 2.4 grams. The sum of the mass of the first set of weight portions **3320** may be about 3 grams whereas the sum of the mass of the first set of weight portions **3330** may be about 16.8 grams. The total mass of the second set of weight portions **3330** may weigh more than five times as much as the total mass of the first set of weight portions **3320** (e.g., a total mass of the second set of weight portions **3330** of about 16.8 grams versus a total mass of the first set of weight portions **3320** of about 3 grams). The golf club head **3300** may have a total mass of 19.8 grams from the first and second sets of weight portions **3320** and **3330**, respectively (e.g., sum of 3 grams from the first set of weight portions **3320** and 16.8 grams from the second set of weight portions **3330**). Accordingly, the first set of weight portions **3320** may account for about 15% of the total mass from exterior weight portions of the golf club head **3300** whereas the second set of weight portions **3330** may account for about 85% of the total mass from exterior weight portions of the golf club head **3300**. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

By coupling the first and second sets of weight portions **3320** and **3330**, respectively, to the body portion **3310** (e.g., securing the first and second sets of weight portions **3320** and **3330** in the weight ports on the back portion **3370**), the location of the center of gravity (CG) and the moment of inertia (MOI) of the golf club head **3300** may be optimized. In particular, the first and second sets of weight portions **3320** and **3330**, respectively, may lower the location of the CG towards the sole portion **3390** and further back away from the face portion **3362**. Further, the MOI may be higher



as measured about a vertical axis extending through the CG (e.g., perpendicular to the ground plane **4110**). The MOI may also be higher as measured about a horizontal axis extending through the CG (e.g., extending towards the toe and heel portions **3350** and **3360**, respectively, of the golf club head **3300**). As a result, the club head **3300** may provide a relatively higher launch angle and a relatively lower spin rate than a golf club head without the first and second sets of weight portions **3320** and **3330**, respectively. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

Alternatively, two or more weight portions in the same set may be different in mass. In one example, the weight portion **3321** of the first set **3320** may have a relatively lower mass than the weight portion **3322** of the first set **3320**. In another example, the weight portion **3331** of the second set **3330** may have a relatively lower mass than the weight portion **3335** of the second set **3330**. With relatively greater mass at the top-and-toe transition region and/or the sole-and-toe transition region, more weight may be distributed away from the center of gravity (CG) of the golf club head **3300** to increase the moment of inertia (MOI) about the vertical axis through the CG.

Although the figures may depict the weight portions as separate and individual parts, each set of the first and second sets of weight portions **3320** and **3330**, respectively, may be a single piece of weight portion. In one example, all of the weight portions of the first set **3320** (e.g., shown as **3321** and **3322**) may be combined into a single piece of weight portion (e.g., a first weight portion). In a similar manner, all of the weight portions of the second set **3330** (e.g., **3331**, **3332**, **3333**, **3334** and **3335**) may be combined into a single piece of weight portion as well (e.g., a second weight portion) similar to the example of FIG. **32**. While the figures may depict a particular number of weight portions, the apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein may include more or less number of weight portions. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

The body portion **3310** may be a hollow body including the interior cavity **3800** extending between the front portion **3360** and the back portion **3370**. Further, the interior cavity **3800** may extend between the top portion **3380** and the sole portion **3390**. The interior cavity **3800** may be associated with a cavity height **3850** ( $H_C$ ), and the body portion **3310** may be associated with a body height **3950** ( $H_B$ ). While the cavity height **3850** and the body height **3950** may vary between the toe and heel portions **3340** and **3350**, and the top and sole portions **3370** and **3390**, the cavity height **3850** may be at least 50% of a body height **3950** ( $H_C > 0.5 * H_B$ ). For example, the cavity height **3850** may vary between 70%-85% of the body height **3950**. With the cavity height **3850** of the interior cavity **3800** being greater than 50% of the body height **3950**, the golf club head **3300** may produce relatively more consistent feel, sound, and/or result when the golf club head **3300** strikes a golf ball via the face portion **3362** than a golf club head with a cavity height of less than 50% of the body height. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

The interior cavity **3800** may be associated with a cavity width **3840** ( $W_C$ ), and the body portion **3310** may be associated with a body width **3990** ( $W_B$ ). The cavity width **3840** and the body width **3990** may vary between the top portion **3380** and the sole portion **3390** and between the toe portion **3340** and the heel portion **3350**. The cavity width **3840** may be at least 50% of a body width **3990**

( $W_C > 0.5 * W_B$ ) at certain regions on the body portion **3310** between the top and sole portions **3370** and **3390** and between the toe and heel portions **3340** and **3350**. According to another example, the cavity width **3840** may vary between about 40%-60% of a body width **3990** at certain regions between the top and sole portions **3380** and **3390**. According to another example, the cavity width **3840** may vary between about 30%-70% of a body width **3990** at certain regions between the top and sole portions **3380** and **3390**. According to another example, the cavity width **3840** may vary between about 20%-80% of a body width **3990** at certain regions between the top and sole portions **3380**. For example, the cavity width **3840** may vary between about 20%-80% of the body width **3990** at or below the horizontal midplane **4120**. With the cavity width **3890** of the interior cavity **3800** that may vary between about 20% or more to about 80% or less of the body width **3990** at or below the horizontal midplane **4120**, a substantial portion of the mass of the golf club head **3300** may be moved lower and farther back as compared to a golf club head with a cavity width of less than about 20% of the body width. Further, the golf club head **3300** may produce relatively more consistent feel, sound, and/or result when the golf club head **3300** strikes a golf ball via the face portion **3362** than a golf club head with a cavity width of less than about 20% of the body width. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

To provide an inner cavity **3800** having cavity a width **3840** that may vary between about 20%-80% of a body width **3990** at or below the horizontal midplane **4120**, to lower the CG of the golf club head **3300**, and/or to move the CG of the golf club head **3300** farther back relative to the face portion **3362**, the back portion **3370** may have a recessed portion **3410** (shown in FIGS. **35**, **36** and **39**) that may extend between a location near the horizontal midplane **4120** and a location at or near the top portion **3380**. The recessed portion **3410** may be defined by an upper wall **3412** of the back portion **3370** and a ledge portion **3414**. The upper wall **3412** of the back portion **3370** may extend from a location at or near the horizontal midplane **4120** to a location at or near the top portion **3380**. The ledge portion **3414** may extend from the upper wall **3412** of the back portion **3370** to a lower wall **3416** of the back portion **3370**. The lower wall **3416** of the back portion **3370** may extend from a location at or near the horizontal midplane **4120** to a location at or near the sole portion **3380**. The ledge portion **3414** may extend from the upper wall **3412** in a direction away from the face portion **3362**. Accordingly, the ledge portion **3414** facilitates a transition from the upper wall **3412** to the lower wall **3416** by which the width of the body portion **3310** is substantially increased at or near the horizontal midplane **4120** as compared to the width of the body portion **3310** above the horizontal midplane. The ledge portion **3414** may have a ledge portion width **3418** (shown in FIG. **39**) that is greater than an upper body width **3420** of the body portion **3310**. In one example, the ledge portion width **3418** may be defined as a width of a surface on the back portion **3370** that extends between a plane **3413** generally defining the upper wall **3412** of the back portion **3370** and a plane **3417** generally defining the lower wall **3416** of the back portion **3370**. The upper body width **3420** may be defined as a width of the body portion **3310** at or above the horizontal midplane **4120**. According to one example, the ledge portion width **3418** may be wider than the upper body width **3420** by a factor of between about 0.5 to about 1.0. According to another example, the ledge portion width **3418** may be wider than the upper body width



**3420** by a factor of about 1.5. According to another example, the ledge portion width **3418** may be wider than the upper body width **3420** by a factor of about 3.0. Accordingly, a golf club according to the examples described herein may have a ledge portion width **3418** that is wider than the upper body width **3420** by a factor of greater than or equal to about 0.5 to less than or equal to about 3.0. Accordingly, the body width **3990** at, near or below the horizontal midplane **4120** may be substantially greater than the upper body width **3420**, which may provide for a cavity width **3840** that may be around 20% to 80% of the body width **3990** at, near or below the horizontal midplane **4120**. Further, the recessed portion **3410** allows the golf club head **3300** to generally have a greater mass below the horizontal midplane **4120** than above the horizontal midplane **4120**. In other words, the mass that is removed from the golf club head **3300** to define the recessed portion **3410** may be moved to aft or back portions of the body portion **3310** that are around and below the horizontal midplane **4120**.

To generally maintain a cavity width **3840** that may be around 20%-80% of the body width **3990**, the cavity width **3840** may be greater near the sole portion **3390** or below the horizontal midplane **4120** than near the top portion **3380** or above the horizontal midplane **4120**. According to one example, the cavity width **3840** may generally vary according to a variation in the body width **3990** at certain regions of the body portion **3310** between the top portion **3380** and the sole portion **3390** and between the toe portion **3340** and the heel portion **3350**. For example, as shown in FIG. 40, the cavity width **3840** may generally vary according to the body width **3990** in certain regions of the body portion **3310** between the top portion **3380** and the sole portion **3390**. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

In one example, the interior cavity **3800** may be unfilled (i.e., empty space). The body portion **3310** with the interior cavity **3800** may weight about 100 grams less than the body portion **3310** without the interior cavity **3800**. Alternatively, the interior cavity **3800** may be partially or entirely filled with an elastic polymer or elastomer material (e.g., a viscoelastic urethane polymer material such as Sorbothane® material manufactured by Sorbothane, Inc., Kent, Ohio), a thermoplastic elastomer material (TPE), a thermoplastic polyurethane material (TPU), and/or other suitable types of materials to absorb shock, isolate vibration, and/or dampen noise. For example, at least 50% of the interior cavity **3800** may be filled with a TPE material to absorb shock, isolate vibration, and/or dampen noise when the golf club head **3300** strikes a golf ball via the face portion **3362**.

In another example, the interior cavity **3800** may be partially or entirely filled with a polymer material such as an ethylene copolymer material to absorb shock, isolate vibration, and/or dampen noise when the golf club head **3300** strikes a golf ball via the face portion **3362**. In particular, at least 50% of the interior cavity **3800** may be filled with a high density ethylene copolymer ionomer, a fatty acid modified ethylene copolymer ionomer, a highly amorphous ethylene copolymer ionomer, an ionomer of ethylene acid acrylate terpolymer, an ethylene copolymer comprising a magnesium ionomer, an injection moldable ethylene copolymer that may be used in conventional injection molding equipment to create various shapes, an ethylene copolymer that can be used in conventional extrusion equipment to create various shapes, and/or an ethylene copolymer having high compression and low resilience similar to thermoset polybutadiene rubbers. For example, the ethylene copolymer may include any of the ethylene copolymers associated

with DuPont™ High-Performance Resin (HPF) family of materials (e.g., DuPont™ HPF AD1172, DuPont™ HPF AD1035, DuPont® HPF 1000 and DuPont™ HPF 2000), which are manufactured by E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Company of Wilmington, Del. The DuPont™ HPF family of ethylene copolymers are injection moldable and may be used with conventional injection molding equipment and molds, provide low compression, and provide high resilience. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

As described herein, the cavity width **3840** may vary between about 20%-80% of a body width **3990** at or below the horizontal midplane **4120**. According to one example, at least 50% of the elastic polymer or elastomer material partially or filling the interior cavity **3800** may be located below the horizontal midplane **4120** of the golf club head **3300**. Accordingly, the center of gravity of the golf club head **3300** may be further lowered and moved farther back as compared to a golf club head with a cavity width of less than about 20% of the body width and that is partially or fully filled with an elastic polymer or elastomer material. Further, the golf club head **3300** may produce relatively more consistent feel, sound, and/or result when the golf club head **3300** strikes a golf ball via the face portion **3362** as compared to a golf club head with a cavity width of less than about 20% of the body width that is partially or fully filled with an elastic polymer material.

The thickness of the face portion **3362** may vary between the top portion **3380** and the sole portion and between the toe portion **3340** and the heel portion as discussed in detail herein and shown in the examples of FIGS. 15 and 16. According, a detailed description of the variation in the thickness of the face portion **3362** is not provided. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

Different from other golf club head designs, the interior cavity **3800** of the body portion **3310** and the location of the first and second sets of weight portions **3320** and **3330**, respectively, along the perimeter of the golf club head **3300** may result in a golf ball traveling away from the face portion **3362** at a relatively higher ball launch angle and a relatively lower spin rate. As a result, the golf ball may travel farther (i.e., greater total distance, which includes carry and roll distances).

The golf club head **3300** may be manufactured by any of the methods described herein and illustrated in FIG. 17. Accordingly, a detailed description of the method of manufacturing the golf club head **3300** is not provided.

As illustrated in FIGS. 37 and 41, for example, the golf club head **3300** may include one or more weight ports (e.g., one shown as weight ports **3521** and **3531**) that may open to the to the cavity **3800**. The weight port **3531** may include a first opening **3930** and a second opening **3935**. The second opening **3935** may be used to access the interior cavity **3800**.

In one example, the process **1700** (FIG. 17) may fill the interior cavity **3800** with an elastic polymer material by injecting the elastic polymer material into the interior cavity **3800** from the first opening **3930** via the second opening **3935**. The first and second openings **3930** and **3935**, respectively, may be same or different in size and/or shape. The weight port **3521** may include a first opening **4030** and a second opening **4035**. The second opening **4035** may be used to access the interior cavity **3800**. In one example, the process **1700** (FIG. 17) may fill the interior cavity **3800** with an elastic polymer material by injecting the elastic polymer material into the interior cavity **3800** from the weight port **3531**. As the elastic polymer fills the interior cavity **3800**, the



air inside the interior cavity **3800** that is displaced by the elastic polymer material may exit the interior cavity from the weight port **3521** through the second opening **4035** and then the first opening **4030**. After the cavity is partially or fully filled with the elastic polymer material, the weight ports **3531** and **3521** may be closed by inserting and securing weight portions therein as described in detail herein. Alternatively, the elastic polymer material may be injected into the interior cavity **3800** from the weight port **3521**. Accordingly, the weight port **3531** may function as an exit port for the displaced air inside the interior cavity **3800**. While the above example may describe and depict particular weight ports with second openings, any other weight ports of the golf club head **4200** may include a second opening (e.g., the weight port **3532**). The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

The body portion and/or any other portion of a golf club head according to any of the examples described herein may be constructed from stainless steel so as to be corrosion resistant. All or portions of the body portion and/or any other portion of the golf club head may be constructed by a forging process. Accordingly, the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion and/or any other portion of the golf club head are constructed may be a forgeable stainless steel. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

The density of the stainless steel may be between and including  $7.0 \text{ g/cm}^3$  and  $8.3 \text{ g/cm}^3$ . In one example, the density of the stainless steel may be between and including  $7.2 \text{ g/cm}^3$  and  $7.8 \text{ g/cm}^3$ . In one example, the density of the stainless steel may be between and including  $7.3 \text{ g/cm}^3$  and  $7.7 \text{ g/cm}^3$ . In one example, the density of the stainless steel may be between and including  $7.1 \text{ g/cm}^3$  and  $7.6 \text{ g/cm}^3$ . In one example, the density of the stainless steel may be between and including  $7.4 \text{ g/cm}^3$  and  $8.3 \text{ g/cm}^3$ . The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

The tensile strength of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 600 MPa and 800 MPa ( $10^6 \text{ Pascal} = 10^6 \text{ N/m}^2$ ). In one example, the tensile strength of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 620 MPa and 780 MPa. In one example, the tensile strength of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 660 MPa and 720 MPa. In one example, the tensile strength of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 680 MPa and 790 MPa. In one example, the tensile strength of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 640 MPa and 760 MPa. In one example, the tensile strength of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 670 MPa and 770 MPa. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

The yield strength of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 500 MPa and 700 MPa. In one example, the yield strength of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 520 MPa and 680 MPa. In one example, the yield strength of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 560 MPa and 620 MPa. In one example, the yield strength of the stainless steel from which

all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 580 MPa and 690 MPa. In one example, the yield strength of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 540 MPa and 660 MPa. In one example, the yield strength of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 570 MPa and 670 MPa. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

The hardness of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 10 and 40 HRC (Rockwell Hardness in the C scale). In one example, the hardness of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 15 and 35 HRC. In one example, the hardness of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 22 and 28 HRC. In one example, the hardness of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 12 and 38 HRC. In one example, the hardness of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 17 and 33 HRC. In one example, the hardness of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 11 and 31 HRC. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

The elongation of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 5% and 40%. In one example, the elongation of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 10% and 32%. In one example, the elongation of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 13% and 28%. In one example, the elongation of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 18% and 37%. In one example, the elongation of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 14% and 33%. In one example, the elongation of the stainless steel from which all of portions of the body portion may be constructed may be between and including 7% and 36%. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

In one example shown in FIG. **43**, a golf club shaft **4300** for use with a golf club including any of the golf club heads described herein may include a shaft body portion **4302** having a first end **4305** and a second end **4307**. The shaft body portion **4302** may include a first end portion **4304**, which may be a portion of the shaft body portion **4302** that extends from a location on the shaft body portion **4302** near the first end **4305** to the first end **4305**. The shaft body portion **4302** may also include a second end portion **4306**, which may be a portion of the shaft body portion **4302** that extends from a location on the shaft body portion **4302** near the second end **4307** to the second end **4307**. A portion or all of the first end portion **4304** may be configured to connect to a body portion (e.g., one shown as **100** in FIG. **1**) of a golf club head or a hosel portion (e.g., one shown as **155** in FIG. **1**) of a golf club head. A portion or all of the second end portion **4306** may receive a grip portion **4308** that may be held by an individual to use the golf club. The grip portion **4308** may extend from the second end **4307** of the shaft body



portion **4302** to a certain location on the shaft body portion **4302**. A golf club head to which the golf club shaft **4300** may be attached may be any type of golf club head or any of the golf club heads described herein. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

In one example shown in FIGS. **43** and **44**, the first end portion **4304** may be filled with an elastic polymer material or an elastomer material (shown in FIGS. **43** and **44** as filler material **4310**) to reduce vibration, increase dampening, and/or improve sound and feel when striking a golf ball (not shown) with a golf club. The filler material **4310** may extend from the first end **4305** of the shaft body portion **4302** through the first end portion **4304** and/or to a certain location along the shaft body portion **4302**. The filler material **4310** may be similar in many respects to any of the elastic polymer materials or elastomer materials described herein. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

The portion of the shaft body portion **4032** that may be filled with the filler material **4310** may have a length **4312**. In one example, the length **4312** may define the length of the first end portion **4304**. In one example, the length **4312** may be between 10 inches (25.4 centimeters) and 20 inches (50.8 centimeters). In one example, the length **4312** may be between 12 inches (30.5 centimeters) and 18 inches (45.7 centimeters). In one example, the length **4312** may be between 14 inches (35.6 centimeters) and 16 inches (40.6 centimeters). The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

In one example shown in FIG. **45**, the first end portion **4304** may include a sleeve portion **4318** constructed from an elastic polymer or elastomer material (shown as sleeve material **4320** in FIG. **45**) to reduce vibration, increase dampening, and/or improve sound and feel when striking a golf ball (not shown) with a golf club. The sleeve portion **4318** may be constructed from different or similar materials as any of the elastic polymer or elastomer materials described herein. The sleeve portion **4318** may surround all or portions of the shaft body portion **4302**. In one example, the length (not shown) of the sleeve portion **4318** may be similar to the length of the first end portion **4304**. In one example, the length of the sleeve portion **4318** may extend from the first end **4305** of the shaft body portion **4302** to a certain location along the shaft body portion **4302**. In one example, the length of the sleeve portion **4318** may be between 10 inches (25.4 centimeters) and 20 inches (50.8 centimeters). In one example, the length of the sleeve portion **4318** may be between 12 inches (30.5 centimeters) and 18 inches (45.7 centimeters). In one example, the length of the sleeve portion **4318** may be between 14 inches (35.6 centimeters) and 16 inches (40.6 centimeters). The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

In one example shown in FIG. **46**, the first end portion **4304** may be filled with the filler material **4310** similar to the example of FIG. **44** and further include the sleeve portion **4318** constructed from the sleeve material **4320** similar to the example of FIG. **45**. The filler material **4310** and the sleeve material **4320** may be the same or different materials. The filler material **4310** and the sleeve portion **4318** may further reduce vibration, increase dampening, and/or improve sound and feel when striking a golf ball (not shown) with a golf club. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

In the example of FIG. **43**, the first end portion **4304** may be filled with an elastic polymer material or an elastomer

material (shown in FIGS. **43** and **44** as filler material **4310**) to reduce vibration, increase dampening, and/or improve sound and feel when striking a golf ball (not shown) with a golf club. In one example, a portion of the filler material **4310** may be located inside the hosel and/or inside the body portion of the golf club head to reduce vibration, increase dampening, and/or improve sound and feel of the golf club as the vibration and forces are transmitted from the body portion of the golf club head to the golf club shaft **4300**. In other words, the filler material **4310** may extend from the first end **4305** of the shaft body portion **4032** into a portion of the hosel portion and/or the body portion of the golf club head and at least partially fill portions of the hosel portion and/or the body portion of the golf club head. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

As shown in the examples of FIGS. **47-52**, the filler material **4310** may be placed at any single and/or multiple inner and/or outer locations (i.e., a sleeve portion) of the shaft body portion **4302** to provide certain vibration reduction, dampening increase, and/or improvement in sound and feel of the golf club. In the example of FIG. **47**, the filler material **4310** (and/or a sleeve portion as described herein) may extend from a location at or near the grip portion **4308** to the first end **4305** of the shaft body portion **4302**. In the example of FIG. **48**, the filler material **4310** (and/or a sleeve portion as described herein) may extend from the second end **4307** of the shaft body portion **4302** to a certain location past the grip portion **4308** and between the first end portion **4304** and the second end portion **4306**. In the example of FIG. **49**, the filler material **4310** (and/or a sleeve portion as described herein) may extend from at or near the grip portion **4308** to a certain location between the first end portion **4304** and the second end portion **4306**. In the example of FIG. **50**, the filler material **4310** (and/or a sleeve portion as described herein) may extend along a portion of the shaft body portion **4302** that includes the grip portion **4308**. The golf club shaft **4300** may include the filler material **4310** (and/or a sleeve portion as described herein) at multiple and separate locations along the shaft body portion **4302**. As shown in FIG. **51**, the filler material **4310** (and/or a sleeve portion as described herein) may extend from the first end **4305** of the shaft body portion **4302** to a certain location along the shaft body portion **430200**, and also extend along a portion of the shaft body portion **4302** that includes the grip portion **4308**. In the example of FIG. **52**, the filler material **4310** (and/or a sleeve portion as described herein) may extend the entire length of the shaft body portion **4302**. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

The filler material **4310** may be any of the elastic polymer or elastomer materials described herein. Portions of the golf club shaft **4300** may be filled with the filler material **4310** from the first end **4305** and/or the second end **4307**. The filler material **4310** may be injected into the shaft body portion **4302** to fill portions of shaft body portion **4302** (i.e., injection molding) as described in detail herein. In one example, the inner walls of the shaft body portion **4302** may be coated with one or more adhesives so that the filler material **4310** adheres to the inner walls of the shaft. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

While the above examples may described an iron-type or a wedge-type golf club head, the apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein may be applicable to other types of golf club heads.



The terms “and” and “or” may have both conjunctive and disjunctive meanings. The terms “a” and “an” are defined as one or more unless this disclosure indicates otherwise. The term “coupled” and any variation thereof refer to directly or indirectly connecting two or more elements chemically, mechanically, and/or otherwise. The phrase “removably connected” is defined such that two elements that are “removably connected” may be separated from each other without breaking or destroying the utility of either element.

The term “substantially” when used to describe a characteristic, parameter, property, or value of an element may represent deviations or variations that do not diminish the characteristic, parameter, property, or value that the element may be intended to provide. Deviations or variations in a characteristic, parameter, property, or value of an element may be based on, for example, tolerances, measurement errors, measurement accuracy limitations and other factors. The term “proximate” is synonymous with terms such as “adjacent,” “close,” “immediate,” “nearby,” “neighboring,” etc., and such terms may be used interchangeably as appearing in this disclosure.

The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein may be implemented in a variety of embodiments, and the foregoing description of some of these embodiments does not necessarily represent a complete description of all possible embodiments. Instead, the description of the drawings, and the drawings themselves, disclose at least one embodiment, and may disclose alternative embodiments.

As the rules of golf may change from time to time (e.g., new regulations may be adopted or old rules may be eliminated or modified by golf standard organizations and/or governing bodies such as the United States Golf Association (USGA), the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews (R&A), etc.), golf equipment related to the apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein may be conforming or non-conforming to the rules of golf at any particular time. Accordingly, golf equipment related to the apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein may be advertised, offered for sale, and/or sold as conforming or non-conforming golf equipment. The apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture described herein are not limited in this regard.

Although certain example apparatus, methods, and articles of manufacture have been described herein, the scope of coverage of this disclosure is not limited thereto. On the contrary, this disclosure covers all apparatus, methods, and articles of articles of manufacture fairly falling within the scope of the appended claims either literally or under the doctrine of equivalents.

What is claimed is:

1. A golf club comprising:
  - a body portion comprising:
    - a top portion,
    - a sole portion,
    - a back portion,
    - a front portion,
    - an interior cavity extending between the top portion and the sole portion, and
    - a width of the body portion below a horizontal midplane being greater than a width of the body portion above the horizontal midplane to define a ledge portion extending to the front portion and the back portion;
  - a plurality of ports located between the ledge portion and the sole portion; and
  - a shaft coupled to the body portion, wherein at least a portion of the shaft is filled with a first polymer material, and

wherein at least 50% of the interior cavity is filled with a second polymer material.

2. A golf club as defined in claim 1, wherein the first polymer material and the second polymer material comprise the same material.

3. A golf club as defined in claim 1, wherein a width of the interior cavity below the horizontal midplane is less than or equal to 80% of the width of the body portion below the horizontal midplane.

4. A golf club as defined in claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of ports is associated with a port diameter, and wherein any two adjacent ports are separated by less than or equal to the port diameter.

5. A golf club as defined in claim 1 further comprising a plurality of weight portions, wherein each port of the plurality of ports is configured to receive a weight portion of the plurality of weight portions.

6. A golf club as defined in claim 1, wherein at least a portion of at least one port of the plurality of ports is closer to the front portion than a portion of the interior cavity.

7. A golf club as defined in claim 1, wherein the front portion comprises a face portion with a thickness of less than or equal to 1.9 millimeters (0.075 inch).

8. An iron-type golf club comprising:
 

- a body portion comprising:
  - a toe portion,
  - a top portion,
  - a sole portion,
  - a back portion,
  - a front portion,
  - an interior cavity extending between the top portion and the sole portion,
  - a first width below a horizontal midplane, and
  - a second width above the horizontal midplane, the second width being less than the first width;
- a shaft coupled to the body portion, at least a portion of the shaft including a first polymer material;
- a second polymer material injection molded in the interior cavity through an opening of the body portion;
- a first set of weight portions having at least one weight portion coupled to the body portion at a location at or above the horizontal midplane, the first set of weight portions being associated with a first total mass; and
- a second set of weight portions having at least one weight portion coupled to the body portion at a location below the horizontal midplane, the second set of weight portions being associated with a second total mass greater than the first total mass,

 wherein at least 50% of the second polymer material in the interior cavity is below the horizontal midplane.

9. An iron-type golf club as defined in claim 8, wherein a width of the interior cavity below the horizontal midplane is less than or equal to 80% of the width of the body portion below the horizontal midplane.

10. An iron-type golf club as defined in claim 8, wherein the first polymer material and the second polymer material comprise the same material.

11. An iron-type golf club as defined in claim 8, wherein the interior cavity is configured to separate the front portion and the first and second sets of weight portions.

12. An iron-type golf club as defined in claim 8, wherein the front portion comprises a face portion with a thickness of less than or equal to 1.9 millimeters (0.075 inch).

13. An iron-type golf club comprising:
 

- a body portion comprising:
  - a toe portion,
  - a top portion,
  - a sole portion,
  - a front portion,



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an interior cavity extending between the top portion and the sole portion, and  
 a back portion comprising:  
 an upper back wall portion above a horizontal midplane,  
 a lower back wall portion below the horizontal midplane, and  
 a ledge portion extending between the upper back wall portion and the lower back wall portion, and between the front portion and the back portion;  
 a shaft coupled to the body portion and being at least partially filled with a polymer material; and  
 a plurality of weight portions located between the ledge portion and the sole portion,  
 wherein a width of the ledge portion is greater than or equal to a width of the body portion above the horizontal midplane.

14. An iron-type golf club as defined in claim 13, wherein the width of the ledge portion is greater than or equal to twice the width of the body portion above the horizontal midplane.

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15. An iron-type golf club as defined in claim 13, wherein the interior cavity is at least 50% filled with a polymer material.

16. An iron-type golf club as defined in claim 13, wherein the front portion comprises a face portion with a thickness of less than 1.9 millimeters (0.075 inch).

17. An iron-type golf club as defined in claim 13, wherein a width of the interior cavity below the horizontal midplane is less than or equal to 80% of a width of the body portion below the horizontal midplane.

18. An iron-type golf club as defined in claim 13, wherein the interior cavity is at least partially filled with a polymer material from at least one port on the body portion.

19. An iron-type golf club as defined in claim 13, wherein the interior cavity is at least partially filled with a polymer material comprising a different material than the polymer material in the shaft.

20. An iron-type golf club as defined in claim 13, wherein the front portion comprises a face portion, and wherein the interior cavity is configured to separate the face portion and the plurality of weight portions.

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